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BOOK IT!

The 18th Annual **NATCHEZ LITERARY & CINEMA CELEBRATION**



"Trading, Jackson Street," a photograph taken by the late Eudora Welty about 1932 in Jackson, Miss., is used courtesy of Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

SOUTHERN ACCENTS: LANGUAGE IN THE DEEP SOUTH

February 22-25, 2007

Natchez Convention Center, Natchez, Mississippi

Lectures, Films, Writing Workshops, Book Signings, Parties, Meals, & "Twain by the Tale," in cooperation with the Natchez Little Theatre

All free or low-cost!

Information & Tickets

601-446-1289 / 866-296-6522 Toll-Free www.colin.edu/nlcc

Sponsors:

Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park
Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Mississippi Public Broadcasting

*This project is partially funded by grants from
the Mississippi Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities.*

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file NLCC
publicity

Mississippi History NEWSLETTER



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Christy Wilson, editor
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Volume 49 No. 2

February 2007

Black Mississippians Who Shaped Our History

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History presents *Black Mississippians Who Shaped Our History*, a thirty-minute video tribute to a few of the many black Mississippians who have made significant contributions to the state's history, airing Monday, February 13, 2006, on Mississippi Public Broadcasting so that schools can record the video for later class-

room use. Additional airing dates and times will be announced at a later date.

Comcast (Hinds County) will air the video on channels 18 and 19 at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, February 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, and 27. Teachers may obtain enrichment activities and evaluations accompanying this program from the department's Web site, mdah.state.ms.us/activities.pdf.

"Telling Mississippi's Stories" MHS Annual Meeting March 1-3

At its annual meeting March 1-3 at the Old Capitol Inn, Jackson, the Mississippi Historical Society will explore the different ways Mississippi's stories are told, according to president Jeanne Luckett and program chair Stephen Sloan.

The keynote speaker will be James W. Loewen, author of the bestseller *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your High School History Textbook Got Wrong*. Loewen is professor emeritus at the University of Vermont, where for twenty years he taught race relations. Earlier in his career Loewen taught at Tougaloo College, and he is the co-author, with Charles Sallis, of the textbook *Mississippi: Conflict and Change*.

Other presentations will examine such diverse subjects as the

history of Jews in Mississippi, Choctaw lawyer and diplomat James McDonald, the Jackson civil rights movement, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting's Rural Voices Radio series.

In addition to the scholarly presentations, there will be a luncheon, banquet, awards luncheon, and tours of the Eudora Welty House, Manship House Museum, and the Oaks House.

Registration for MHS members is \$20 for individuals and \$25 for couples. Registration forms and meeting details are available at mdah.state.ms.us. Information and registration is also available by phone (601-576-6849) or email (mhs@mdah.state.ms.us). Special rates are available at the Old Capitol Inn and the Edison Walthall for the meeting.

FEBRUARY: 50% Off Selected Black History Titles at the OLD CAPITOL SHOP in the William F. Winter Archives and History Building / 601-576-6921

Historic Natchez Conference Feb. 6-10

The Seventh Biennial Historic Natchez Conference, "Never Past: History and Memory in the Old Natchez District," will be held February 6-10 at the Eola Hotel in Natchez. The Conference aims to foster the study, preservation, and appreciation of the history of the Natchez region by providing a forum for established scholars, graduate students, representatives from major archival collections, and the general public to share research, resources, and ideas. The 2007 conference explores subjects as diverse as Native American culture, planter aristocracy, slavery, Reconstruction, Jewish culture, and civil rights. In addition to lectures, there will be receptions and meals in historic Natchez houses, and garden, cemetery, and archaeological tours. Some of the scheduled speakers include Fitzhugh Brundage, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, speaking on "Contests Over the South's History," and Don Carleton, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin, on "The Continuing Saga of the Alamo and the 'Diary of José Enrique de la Peña.'"

A session on the Natchez Indians will be moderated by Vincas P. Steponaitis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with talks

cont'd page two

NLCC Feb. 22-25

Carolyn Vance Smith, founder and co-chairman of the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, announces this year's conference will be held February 22-25 at the Natchez Convention Center with the theme "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

The language of the South will be examined through many activities—lectures, films, exhibits, discussions, concerts, a play, book signings, writing workshops, and receptions.

Highlights include sessions on southern orators in the United States Senate by Senator Thad Cochran and David G. Sansing, University of Mississippi; famous southern preachers by Charles Reagan Wilson, University of Mississippi, and author Will Campbell; William Faulkner's use of language by Donald Kartiganer, University of Mississippi; Eudora Welty's love of word play by Suzanne Marrs, Millsaps College; and dialect and messages of Negro spirituals by Clarence Jones, East Baton Rouge High School—among many others.

Three acclaimed Mississippi writers—Beverly Lowry, Al Young, and (screenwriter) Charles Burnett—will be honored in award ceremonies February 24.

Most of the conference is free. Four agencies sponsor the NLCC—Copiah-Lincoln Com-

cont'd page two

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Success depends on commitment to education

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.

If you watch a lot of movies, you might recognize this quote from one of last summer's popular films, "Akeelah and the Bee."

It is story about a young girl growing up in South Central Los Angeles who discovers a love for spelling. Unfortunately she lives in a neighborhood that looks down upon the "brainiacs." So Akeelah hides her smarts with her use of slang words and her attitude.

It isn't until forced by her principal as a punishment, that Akeelah attends the school spelling bee and wins.



BEN

HILLIER

Columnist

With the help of a retired professor and former spelling champion, Akeelah goes on to win many other contests.

As she progresses to each competition, she suddenly begins to think that maybe a poor kid from South

Central Los Angeles has no place competing — something that she has heard from her neighbors, school-mates and family.

That is when the professor shows Akeelah the quote in an effort to bolster her self-confidence.

The scene came back to me Thursday morning as Natchez-Adams School District officials announced that three schools in the district have dropped to Level 2-low performing.

To put this in perspective, there are 842 public schools in the state of Mississippi. Of those schools 407 were considered either low performing or under-performing. Three are in Natchez.

It is a sobering statistic — three of our schools find themselves in the bottom 13 percent of all of the schools in the state.

So why would I be thinking about our potential to be "powerful beyond measure" when our schools sit at the bottom of the state list?

Because like Akeelah we as a community have to make a choice.

We can decide that we can't compete or decide that we can excel.

I prefer to think we can excel.

But it will take the entire community — not just the teachers and students of the public schools.

As school officials pointed out Thursday, students can be taught how to read. But it is using those reading skills which makes learning accessible.

In Adams County one in three adults cannot read. Southwest Mississippi has one of the highest illiteracy rates in the country.

If students do not see the importance of applying reading skills in their families and community, then they will fail to learn.

It is the difference between learning to read and reading to learn.

Interestingly enough, as Web Editor for the newspaper, I am amazed by statistics that show how little interest our online readers have in stories about education.

It may be that most of our online readers do not have children in school, do not think that education stories are interesting or that such stories are applicable in their daily lives.

Certainly education stories do not attract the same readership as stories about jobs and new industry. Yet, they should. Because education is about our future — yours and mine, whether we have children or not.

In "Akeelah and the Bee," the neighborhood begins to rally around Akeelah and help her learn words for the National Spelling Bee.

It's a happy Hollywood ending to be sure. But doesn't it point out the importance of community to learning?

Natchez already has many events from the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration to the Richard Wright book readings that could be a starting point for excellence in reading and education.

OUR OPINION

Education leads in week's good news

With February nearly behind us and spring on the way, now is a good time to pause and review the good news of the last week.

► Ferriday Upper Elementary School has received \$80,000 to revamp the way the administrators and teachers think about education. The grant money will be used to hire social workers and eventually implement healthy living curriculum.

FUES is an academically struggling school, but this money will allow the school to address some of the issues currently hindering children from learning.

► Another Ferriday school, Ferriday Junior High, will soon be getting the male role model its students need.

James Davis will take over as the school's principal in March. Davis is ready to tackle discipline problems and become someone the students can look up to, he said.

► A full slate of candidates have signed up for the year's Adams County elections. Democracy is fueled by competition, and we are glad to see so many locals are concerned about our community. With the deadline to qualify approaching this week, the race for several offices look to be good ones.

► The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration wrapped up this weekend after several days of interesting and informative sessions for the community. This event is an important one for our community, and it is good to see yet another successful year.

As we enter March, we are sure the news in the Miss-Lou will continue to be just as good.

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Director of Choral Music
Dr. David Blackburn

Accompanist
Mr. Tony Gordon

Interim Chairman, Department of Fine Arts
Dr. Larry Konecky

**THE NATCHEZ LITERARY AND
CINEMA CELEBRATION**
presents

THE
**ALCORN STATE
UNIVERSITY CONCERT
CHOIR**

in a

**FESTIVAL OF
SPIRITUALS**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2007
St. Mary Minor Basilica
Natchez, Mississippi
7:00 p.m.

**The 18th Annual
Natchez Literary and Cinema
Celebration**

February 22-25, 2007

presents

**SOUTHERN ACCENTS:
LANGUAGE IN THE DEEP SOUTH**



**Headquarters:
Natchez Convention Center
211 Main Street
Natchez, Mississippi**

*Unless otherwise noted, all events are free.
Locations change for certain events.*

**SPONSORS: COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE,
NATCHEZ NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK,
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY,
AND MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC BROADCASTING**

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OPINION

Mississippi's Best Community Daily Newspaper

OUR OPINION

Take a stroll down literary lane

For 18 years literature has come to life in Natchez.

And what better place? Our quaint surroundings are novellesque without the pen and paper of the

world's finest authors. Toss in a literary mind and Natchez can quickly become home to masterpieces.

So when the doors to the annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration kick open today the folks inside will be right at home.

We're glad they are here. Any festival that has lasted 18 years is likely a successful one.

For Natchez, this celebration means distinguished speakers, interested listeners and an education for us all.

Today through Sunday our city will be alive with stories from the past and lessons for the future. This year's celebration will begin the yearlong preparation for next year's event, which will honor Richard Wright.

September 2008 will mark 100 years since Wright was born near Roxie, and the literary world will be celebrating. But Natchez has the right idea — his life started here, so we'll start the party early.

Most of this week's events will be at the Natchez Convention Center and most are free of charge, so take a break from work or school and head on over to see what you can learn and whom you can meet.

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Fayette

Lord, I pray you'll keep that love so pure and sweet
That I know lives deep in the heart of Dixie



Tricia Walker THE HEART OF DIXIE

a singer/songwriter who reflects a strong social conscience in her songs...she accompanies it all with an advanced musicianship that gently carries the listener through.

PERFORMING SONGWRITER MAGAZINE

This singer/songwriter is committed to writing lasting music

OXFORD AMERICAN MAGAZINE

For years I have loved the way Tricia weaves a story into a song her mellow, bluesy style makes for a great vocal delivery.



In Concert Feb. 23 @ 7 p.m. &
Feb. 24 & 6:30 p.m.
Natchez Coffee Co.
509 Franklin Street - 304-1415

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The University

Alcorn State University was created by an act of the Mississippi State Legislature on May 13, 1871. The institution was created as a "seminary of learning" and was originally named Alcorn University of Mississippi in honor of Governor James L. Alcorn, who was then governor of the state of Mississippi. The institution has a rich and illustrious history. It is located on the site of the former Oakland College, a Presbyterian school for the education of white males. Oakland College closed its doors at the beginning of the Civil War so that its students might answer the call to arms. Upon failing to reopen after the war, the state purchased the college for the education of its "Negro citizens." The Honorable Hiram R. Revels, the first Black to serve in the United States Senate, resigned his seat in the U.S. Senate in 1871 to become the first president of the newly established institution. The university is situated at Alcorn State in Claiborne County, Mississippi, five miles west of Lumberton, twelve miles southwest of Port Gibson, and forty miles south of Vicksburg, Mississippi. State Highway 552 forks off from U.S. Highway 61 one mile north of Lumberton, Mississippi, and leads directly to the campus. Alcorn State University is a land-grant, liberal arts, science, and teacher education public institution with programs in selected professional areas such as business and nursing, and currently offers programs leading to the associate (in nursing only), baccalaureate, masters, and specialist degrees.

The Concert Choir

Made up of talented singers from across America, the Alcorn State University Concert Choir has toured throughout the United States presenting programs that reflect the entire gamut of choral music. In addition to the numerous on-campus performances, the choir gives stellar performances at New York City's world renowned Carnegie Hall (Vivaldi's *Gloria*, 2006), the inauguration of President George W. Bush (2005), and at Walt Disney World (World Magic Music Days, 2004). The Festival of Christmas concert, performed at St. Mary Minor Basilica in Natchez, Mississippi has become a much anticipated annual event. This year, the choir will open the Natchez Festival of Music at St. Mary Minor Basilica with a special performance of Mozart's *Requiem* on May 5, 2007, at 8:00 p.m.

Programme

I'm Gonna Sing Til' the Spirit Moves in My Heart . Moses Hogan	
True Light	Keith Hampton Brandon Mitchell, Soloist
Down By the Riverside	John Rutter
Battle of Jericho	Moses Hogan
Deep River	Mark Hayes Dedra Edwards, Soloist
Ain't Got Time to Die	Hall Johnson James Allen, Soloist
Go Tell It On the Mountain	Paul Sjohund James Allen and Derrick Young, Soloists
Elijah Rock	Moses Hogan



"STORYTELLING IN THE SOUTH: A WAY OF LIFE"

A program for Copiah-Lincoln Community College students, faculty, and staff

BY DIANE WILLIAMS
ARTS INDUSTRY PROGRAM DIRECTOR
MISSISSIPPI ARTS COMMISSION
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

11 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2007

Nelson Multi-Purpose Room, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez, Mississippi
*This program is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Student Support Services,
and the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.*

Presiding:

Diane Williams is Arts Industry Program Director, Mississippi Arts Commission, Jackson, Miss., where she works with individual artists and nonprofit arts and cultural organizations to expand their capacity to carry out their programs, assure the adequacy of critical resources, strengthen management skills, and participate as full partners with other civic institutions in the lives of their community. She attended Houston Community College, Essex College, and American Management Association. She is past Board Chair, National Storytelling Network, and is author of *Annie Mae Jumps the Broom* and *The Storytelling Classroom - Applications Across the Curriculum*.

This program is a special component of the 18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration
"SOUTHERN ACCENTS: LANGUAGE IN THE DEEP SOUTH"
Feb. 22-25, 2007

Headquarters: Natchez Convention Center, 211 Main Street

Most of the conference is free of charge. The public is invited.

Tickets to two events at the Natchez Convention Center are available at the door. They are:

- A concert, "Rejoice and Sing," by the Alcorn State University Choir, 7:30 p.m., Thurs., Feb. 22, @ \$10.
- A play, *Twain by the Tale*, 8 p.m., Fri., Feb. 23, @ \$15.

For complete conference schedule: www.colin.edu/nlcc

The NLCC is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. This project is partially funded by the Mississippi Humanities Council.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

February 1 -28

Black History Month Field Trips

Contact Historic Jefferson College
601-442-2901

Location: Historic Jefferson College

February 3

Krewe of Phoenix Mardi Gras Ball

Natchez Convention Center 8pm

Call Sara Garcia for more information
601-442-7845

February 4

Victorian Valentines and Scrapbooks

Original to Rosalie Mansion

Original 19th Century valentines and Scrapbooks from Rosalie will be displayed throughout the mansion.

Included with regular house tours.

For more information contact

Rosalie Mansion, 100 Orleans Street

601-445-4555, Rebecca Martin

Website: www.rosaliemansion.com

Email: Rebecca@rosaliemansion.com

February 9

Alpheus Mardi Gras Parade

Join us in Historic Downtown Natchez for the Mystic Krewe of Alpheus

"Great Rivalries" Mardi Gras Parade at 6pm.

February 10

Alpheus Mardi Gras Ball

Join us in Historic Downtown Natchez for the Mystic Krewe of Alpheus

"Great Rivalries" Mardi Gras Ball at the Natchez Community Center, 215 Franklin Street.

Contact Mark Van Devender

for more information - 601-437-5121

February 10

Krewe of Mer Mardi Gras Ball

Krewe of Mer Grand Ball will be held at the Natchez Convention Center at 8pm. This year's theme is Harlem Knights. Requires membership in Krewe of Mer or by invitation only.

February 15 - 17, 2007, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 18, 2007, 2 p.m.

Twain by the Tale by Dennis Snee

A revue of Mark Twain stories, in a series of sketches and monologues. A brilliantly composed theatre piece, bringing to life the unpredictable wit and timeless perceptions of the great humorist, Mark Twain. Done in the Story Theatre and Thurber Carnival form, some of Twain's favorite targets are laid bare: Bigots and bureaucrats, monarchs and moralists, cowardly duelists and frustrated suitors. There are also Twain's unreserved, razor-sharp thoughts on friendship, vice, good breeding and politicians.

"Twain by the Tale" makes a delightful evening. To be performed in conjunction with the Natchez Literary Cinema Celebration. Adult Tickets: \$15 Call 601-442-3322

February 16

Krewe of Flamingos Mardi Gras Ball

Requires membership in Krewe of Flamingos or by invitation only.

Krewe of Phoenix Parade

Join us in Historic Downtown Natchez for the Krewe of Phoenix Mardi Gras

Parade at 4pm

February 22 - 25

Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration

"Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South"

Award winning 18th annual conference.

Location: Natchez Convention Center throughout the city and surrounding areas. For more information contact 601-442-9111 Carolyn Vance Smith Website: www.colin.edu/nlc Email: Carolyn.smith@colin.cc.ms.us

February 23-24

Trica Walker Concert with Davis Raines

Location: Natchez Coffee Co 509 Franklin Street

7:00 pm

Admission \$10

Fayette native Trica Walker, will perform in concert. Nashville singer-song writer Davis Raines will make a guest star appearance.

For information contact Bill Furlow at 601-304-1415 or bfurlow@natchezcoffee.com

February 24

Natchez Junior Auxiliary River City Fun Run

Location: Main St at Memorial Park

Registration 7:30am - 10k Run 5k

Walk 8:30am - Adults 13 and up

1 Mile Fun Run - Youth 12 and Under

All proceeds go to the Junior

Auxiliary's Children's Fund. The

Junior Auxiliary assists 6 Children

based organizations in our area.

For more information contact

Cara Moody

Email: caramoody@bellsouth.net

or 601-304-1602

February 25

Celebrating Richard Wright

The second program in a year-long celebration of the life and literary work of internationally acclaimed author Richard Wright that will culminate in the celebration of his 100th birthday: "Lawd Today"

In Co-LiN *The Place to Be* ATTCHEZ



Campus newsletter - February 14, 2007



Security officer Arthur Jackson recently received the Co-Lin High Performance Award for his outstanding service to the college. Dr. Howell C. Garner, Co-Lin president, center, made the presentation. With Garner are, from left, Dr. Ronnie Nettles, Co-Lin executive vice president; Gail McGruder, Co-Lin employee and the most recent High Performance Award recipient, and Teresa Harrison, dean of the Natchez campus.

NLCC kicks off Feb. 21

The 18th Annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration begins with a special program at Co-Lin/Natchez co-sponsored by Student Support Services, and held in conjunction with February Black History Month.

Award-winning storyteller Diane Williams will present "Storytelling in the South: A Way of Life," Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 11 a.m., in the W. L. Nelson Multi-Purpose Room. Williams' program relates directly to the theme of this year's NLCC: "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

The majority of the award-winning, mostly free NLCC will take place at the Natchez Convention Center, 211 Main St. Lectures, book signings, films, discussion sessions, receptions and more are on tap.

Williams, an author, editor, workshop presenter and Arts Industry Director for the Mississippi Arts Commission, likes to say she is "a keeper of treasured tales, collector of phrases and a griot."

Campus blood drive scheduled for Feb. 21

Circle K will sponsor a blood drive Wednesday, Feb. 21, in the academic activity room across from the Wellness Center. There is an urgent need for blood this time of year, so please consider participating. The drive will be from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. All students and staff are urged to sign up for a time slot on the sheet on the bulletin board near the bookstore.

Campus planning a busy spring

Spring Fling, dance, other events ahead

This spring will be a busy time on the Natchez Campus, with a variety of events, projects and activities.

The annual Spring Fling will be held Wednesday, April 4, just before Easter break. SHARE (Student Hospitality and Recruitment) is taking the lead in planning and organizing the event.

That evening, a Spring Fling dance is planned. Other activities are being considered for that week as well.

Details are still being shaped up, however, clubs and organizations are encouraged to participate in Spring Fling, which will be held during the day. Clubs can create games for participants to play and receive prizes, or they can provide food items for sale.

To participate or for information, contact Nancy McFarland, academic counselor, in the Admissions Office.

On Thursday, Feb. 15, Delta Epsilon Chi will sell Chicken Rotel dinners for \$5 each in the Career/Technical Center Dining Room. The meal comes with green beans, corn, roll, butterfinger cake and tea (for those dining in).

Contact Melinda Laird, DEX advisor, at 446-1154, or melinda.laird@colin.edu.

The Natchez chapter of the National Technical Honor

Society is planning a service project and an induction ceremony, scheduled for Thursday, March 1.

Phi Theta Kappa has been selling popcorn at various campus and times around campus and will continue to do so.

PTK has a regional conference in Biloxi ahead as well as a national conference in Nashville, Tenn.

PTK also is planning a service project, a speaker program and an induction ceremony.

HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) is shaping up plans for a campus-wide health initiative.

The SGA also is sponsoring a Valentine's Basket.

SHARE is selling discount cards for \$3, which will allow the card-holder to receive discounts at certain local merchants (see story on Page 2). In addition, SHARE is considering a St. Patrick's Raffle.

Phi Beta Lambda is working on an Easter Egg Hunt at Duncan Park as well as raffling a Valentine's Basket.

N-Sights plans three editions this semester, the first of which will be published next week, and the annual Spring Fling Bowling Ball, a club-vs-club bowling and dress-up contest at Rivergate Bowl in April.



Williams

The Natchez Democrat

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2006

SUNDAY EDITION

Richard Wright Celebration of author's life begins Jan. 18

BY JOAN GANDY
THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — Commemorating the 100th birthday of one of Natchez's most famous celebrities cannot begin too soon.

On Jan. 18, the celebration will begin — a tribute to writer Richard Wright, born Sept. 4, 1906, at a plantation in rural Adams County and hailed as one of the literary giants of the 20th century.

The January kickoff of "Richard Wright on the Eve of His 100th Birthday" will be 6 to 8 p.m. at the Alcorn State University business administration auditorium, featuring a discussion of "Uncle Tom's Children," led by Wright scholar Dr. Jerry W. Ward Jr. of Dillard University in New Orleans.

Throughout 2007, the reading series will continue, once a month, as a preparation for the



Wright

SEE AUTHOR, 7A

NATIONAL & LOCAL

www.natchezdemocrat.com

THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT 7A

AUTHOR: Richard Wright's 100th birthday to be celebrated year-long with events

FROM PAGE 1A

culmination of the birthday at the 2008 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, said Carolyn Vance Smith, founder and co-chairman of the NLCC.

"The Literary and Cinema Celebration steering committee works far in advance with themes for the conference," Smith said.

"Quite a long time ago we knew Richard Wright's 100th birthday would be in 2008, and we decided on that theme."

Four years ago, Ward, both a speaker and an adviser to the celebration, offered to lead monthly discussions of Wright's works in 2007.

"The advisory board thought this was so generous," Smith said.

For all of his fame as author of the most highly touted works, "Native Son" and "Black Boy," Wright wrote many other important works, Smith said.

It is appropriate that people in his hometown learn more about him, she said.

JANUARY TO MAY SCHEDULE

JAN. 18: "Uncle Tom's Children," ASU business administration auditorium, 6 to 8 p.m.

FEB. 25: "Lawd Today," Copiah-Lincoln Community College W.L. Nelson Multi-Purpose Room, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

MARCH 3: "Native Son" and "Rite of Passage," NAFAC Museum, 301 Main St., 1 to 5 p.m.

APRIL 21: "Black Boy," Natchez Little Theatre, 391 Linton Ave., 1 to 3 p.m.

MAY 5: "12 Million Black Voices," Natchez High School auditorium, 319 Seagrave St. Prentiss Drive, 2 to 4 p.m.

"Jerry Ward and others want to wake the world up on how powerful a writer he was," Smith said.

The reading series, free and open to the public, will meet at a different location each month.

"Moving the events around town makes it more of an all-inclusive event," Smith said. "Everyone has been very co-



Ward

operative."

One concern was getting enough copies of the Wright books for participants to read before the events.

Dozens of books, funded through a grant and through donations from various agencies throughout Natchez, are on order at discounted prices through Turning Pages Books & More and will be placed at Armstrong Library for checkout.

Sponsors of the year-long project are the NLCC, Copiah-Lincoln Community College and the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture.

Ward will lead the discussions, providing informal guides ahead of time for participants to consider while reading the Wright works.

For example, some of the questions to consider for the first reading, "Uncle Tom's Children," are how the stories

challenge readers to consider the South and a sense of place, what social issues arise in "Big Boy Leaves Home" and what the importance of Christianity is in "Fire and Cloud" and "Bright Morning Star."

Teachers attending the reading series may earn continuing education units, from 5 to 2.6, depending on attendance. Teacher registration, handled by Delecia Carey, is \$25 for all or part of the series for teachers earning CEUs and will be open at any of the individual monthly meetings.

The committee that is planning and implementing the Wright series includes Charles Merritt, chairman; Charles Wright, a Natchez kinsman of Richard Wright; David Dryer, Natchez historian; Delecia Carey, head of school at Trinity Episcopal School; Frances Doss, English teacher at Natchez High School; and Tena Payne, retired educator with the Natchez-Adams County public schools.

Smith serves as committee liaison with the Literary and Cinema Celebration.

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OUR OPINION

Wright still offers lessons for us today

The world was a radically different place in 1908. At the beginning of the year, the first ball dropped in New York City's Times Square, celebrating the New Year.

That summer would mark the first time women competed in modern Olympic games.

On Sept. 4, 1908, Henry Ford likely was preparing the final details of his first Model T, which would be built later that month.

And on that day in Roxie a grandson of slaves was born into a world of racism and poverty.

Soon that baby, Richard Nathaniel Wright, would grow into a man, a man whose direct, personal words would affect the world for decades to come.

Some of Richard Wright's works created controversy when written. His political views made both him and his works untouchable to some. Eventually, Mississippi's native son found refuge in Paris, a foreign land in which he felt more fully accepted.

Yet, today, Wright's life and works are still being studied and interpreted, reconsidered and, perhaps, more accurately understood with the clarity only time can offer.

Later this month, a special series focusing on Wright will begin in Natchez. Throughout 2007, Wright scholar Dr. Jerry W. Ward will lead a discussion focused on one of Wright's works.

The goal is to begin building momentum for the 2008 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration that will feature Wright.

And in the process, countless residents have a free opportunity to learn about the world through the eyes of a small baby with a big, world-changing voice.

NLCC to honor three writers with Miss. roots

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NLCC — Winning awards for excellence in writing at the 2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration are three nationally recognized writers, all with deep Mississippi roots.

The awards ceremony, set for 8 p.m. on Feb. 24, at the Natchez Convention Center, honors Beverly E. Lowry and AJ Young, winners of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards, and Charles Burnett, winner of the Horton Poole Award for Special Achievement in Screenwriting. The event is free and open to the public.

The Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award was established in 1994 to honor the internationally known

author, Richard Wright.

Winners of the award are honored each year for a body of literary work. They must be outstanding, living writers with a strong Mississippi connection.

Lowry, who was reared in Greenville and educated at The University of Mississippi, now lives in Austin, Texas, and is a professor of creative writing at George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

She is the author of *Crossed Over: A Murder, A Memoir, Her Dream of Dreams: The Rise and Triumph of Madam C. J. Walker, The Track of Real Desires, Come Back, Lolly Ray, Breaking Gentle, The Perfect Sonja, Emma Blue, Daddy's Girl* and *Harriet*



Lowry



Young



Burnett

Tubman, *Inauguring a Life*, to be published in April.

She has also had published numerous non-fiction essays, memoirs, articles and short fiction.

Young, a native of Ocean Springs, and now of Berkeley Calif., is distinguished as the current California Poet Laureate. He was educated at the

University of Michigan and the University of California at Berkeley.

He has taught writing and literature at Stanford University, Pothill Community College, Colorado College, the University of Washington and the University of California at both Santa Cruz and Berkeley.

His novels include *Who Is Angelina?*, *Setting Pretty*, *Ask Me Now* and *Seduction by Light*. He has also written books of poetry, scripts and musical memoirs, and edited *Quilt*, an international journal devoted to multicultural writing.

Charles Burnett is a native of Vickburg, who now lives in Los Angeles. He attended Los Angeles Community College and the University of South-

ern California, Los Angeles.

He is author of the screenplays *Killer of Sheep*; *To Sleep with Anger*; *My Brother's Wedding*; *Queen of Blood Astoria*; *The Glass Shield*; *When It Rains*; *Nightjohn*; *The Wedding*; *Dr. Endersha*; *Ida Mae Holland*; *Selma*; *Lord, Selma*; *The Annihilation of Fish*; *Olivia's Story*; *Findings*; *Black McHenry*; and *Blow Their Little Hearts*.

Presenting the awards are William E. Winter, President of the Board of Trustees, Mississippi Department of Archives and History; John D. W. Guice, Co-chairman of the Richard Wright Awards Committee; and Ward Emling, member of the Horton Poole Awards Committee.

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Literary celebration offers credits

Teachers, there's good news for you! You can earn a total of 2.4 Continuing Education Units by attending "Mississippi's most significant annual conference devoted to literature, history, film and culture."

Yes, that is how the annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration is referred to by official Mississippi Humanities Council evaluators.

This award-winning conference, now in its 18th year, is one of the most enjoyable ways to learn new information to take back to the classroom. This year's event is called *Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South*.

Mostly free, the event features more than 20 programs on various angles of the use of Southern language, including the award-winning words of such Southern icons as William Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Richard Wright; humorous stories; patrician orations in the United States Senate; fire-and-damnation sermons; country song lyrics; messages and dialects in spirituals; the French dialects of Louisiana; word play, anecdotes, myths and tall tales.

Rounding out the lectures are all sorts of events: a concert of spirituals by the Alcorn State University Choir; a play about Mark Twain and his love of stories; films; book signings; discussion sessions; a tour of the newly restored Federal Courthouse; writing workshops; an award ceremony honoring the writers Beverly Lowry, Al Young and Charles Burnett; supper at the Museum of the Natchez Association of Afro-American Culture; a reception at the antebellum mansion Choctaw; and dinner at The Briars, overlooking the Mississippi River.



TOP OF THE MORNING
Sturleen Butler Morris

The Olympic award-winning conference begins at 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 22, at the Natchez Convention Center. Programs continue there daily until Saturday evening, Feb. 24. The conference concludes with writing workshops Sunday, Feb. 25, at Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

For those wishing to obtain CEUs, a registration form must be completed prior to the start of the conference. The cost for 2.4 CEUs is \$75. For those who cannot attend the entire conference and thus will earn fewer than 2 CEUs, the cost is \$65. The fee pays for CEUs as well as for attendance at three ticketed events.

More information about CEU credit is available by calling me at the Natchez-Adams School District's headquarters at 601-445-2900 or e-mailing her at stbmorris@natchez.k12.ms.us.

Registration forms are available at the receptionist's desk at the Braden Building, 10 Homochitto St., Natchez.

The conference is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. It is partially funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Mississippi Humanities Council.

More information about the celebration is available by calling 601-446-1289 or at www.lin.edu/nlcc.

STURLEEN BUTLER-MORRIS is a Natchez-Adams School District employee.

Quickly

ers for sale. "Both events are near capacity."
Three additional events have plenty of space and they are to take place at either the Center or Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

They are also at State University Choir at the Center, Feb. 22 at \$10; a performance by the "Tale" at the Convention 25 at \$15; and writing workshops 25 at \$15.
Tickets are available by calling 601-446-1289, 446-4322 or clicking on www.lin.edu.

to accommodate more people."
St. John's program, called "How I Grew Up in the South and Lived to Draw About It," will now take place at the Convention Center at 11:30 a.m., followed by a book signing honoring the author.

Other ticketed events that are near sell-out are a reception/supper Feb. 22 at the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture for \$15, and a benefit reception/supper at The Briars, overlooking the Mississippi River at \$125.
"NAPAC Museum can accommodate only 200 people, and The Briars party has only 100 tickets."

Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

Other partial funding comes from the Mississippi Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities, as well as from businesses, institutions and individuals.

"We are very pleased with the early return on ticket sale," Smith said.

"One event has had a particularly huge response with 225 ticket-buyers. This is a two-part event, Feb. 23, featuring a program by the humorist and author Robert St. John of Hattiesburg and a luncheon at the Carriage House at Stanton Hall. We have encouraged that event

NLCC ticketed events selling

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ—Tickets for certain events during the 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration are nearly sold out, said Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, founder and co-chairman of the conference.

The NLCC, set for Feb. 22-25, is headquartered at the Natchez Convention Center. More than two dozen programs will use the theme, "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."
Most of the conference is free because of support from the four sponsoring institutions, which are Co-Lin, Natchez National Historical

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Young writers present award-winning works

BY JULIE COTTRELL
THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — Ten talented young writers gathered Saturday afternoon at the Judge George W. Armstrong Library to read their award-winning stories and poems as part of Chocolate Milk Café.

Sponsored by the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration and founded by Mark LaFrancis of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, the program, which encourages kids to write, is in its second year.

"It started as a way to incorporate young people into the NLCC," LaFrancis said.

"Teachers help us by getting their class to write for us, and schools from all over the Miss-Lou — from Adams County to Concordia Parish — send us a sampling of students' works. We choose the best out of those."

This year, 75 poems and short stories were submitted based on the theme, "Young Writers Explore their Roots." Out of those, 18 were chosen and compiled into a book. Proceeds from the book, which sells for \$5, benefit the Armstrong Library's children's library.

Ten of the 18 students read their works of art

"And who knows, out of this group there may be a Richard Wright or a Eudora Welty. We just want to encourage them to keep writing."

Mark LaFrancis

Chocolate Milk Café founder and coordinator

friends.

The young writers were all in fifth- and sixth-graders from Adams County Christian School, Morgantown School, Trinity Episcopal Day School and Vidalia Upper Elementary School.

"We chose the fifth- and sixth-grade age range because that's when the kids are at an age where they are being exposed to creative writing, and they have fertile imaginations. It teaches them that literature is not only to be read and enjoyed, but also written," LaFrancis said.

Topics ranged from family traditions to vacations to

sweet memories from their home," LaFrancis said.

"It took a lot to do that."

Marlon Gray, of Morgantown School, wrote a poem entitled, "My Bad Brother."

"When I wished for my brother, I wanted a good one stat. Instead, I got a mean, yellow-toothed little brat," Gray read, to a laughing crowd.

Jack Daly, of Trinity Episcopal Day School, wrote a short story about his family's skiing trip in Colorado.

"Just thinking of snow skiing makes me happy. My favorite parts are being with my family, the warm lodge, the fire and the food," he read.

Shakara Perry, of Morgantown School, wrote about cooking with her grandmother.

"Cooking with my grandma every day, it's better than going outside to play. Cooking with Grandma May, that just makes me want to smile every day," she read.

"They rehearsed how to present their work," LaFrancis said after listening to the young writers and entertainers.

"I was amazed. And who knows, out of this group there may be a Richard Wright or a Eudora Welty. We want to encourage them to keep

ing."

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2007

THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT 7A

TWAIN BY THE TALE



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Today at 2 p.m. will be the last showing of "Twain by the Tale" at the Natchez Little Theatre. The show has been running this weekend in cooperation with the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration. The play is a modern comedy revue of famous stories by Mark Twain that refer to Natchez. Reservations may be made by calling 601-442-2233. Cast members are, seated from left to right, Ryan Dixon Richardson, Rusty Jenkins and Laurie Williams. Standing left to right are Casey Gilbert; Darlene McCune; Layne Taylor; Gloria Neemes and John Ballard.

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The Natchez Democrat

SUNDAY EDITION

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2007

NLCC presents awards

PRESENTATIONS
BY BEVERLY LOWRY

AWARDS — The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration wrapped off its 18th annual celebration with an awards ceremony at the convention center.

The NLCC presented the 18th annual Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award and Horton Frost Award for Best Screenplay. The NLCC also presented the 18th annual Horton Frost Award for Best Screenplay. The NLCC also presented the 18th annual Horton Frost Award for Best Screenplay.

The first Richard Wright Award recipient was Beverly Lowry, who was presented with the award by Charles Burnett. The first Horton Frost Award recipient was Charles Burnett, who was presented with the award by Beverly Lowry.

Lowry said, "Thank you so much for this great opportunity and the great honor." Burnett said, "Thank you so much for this great opportunity and the great honor."

Lowry said, "Thank you so much for this great opportunity and the great honor." Burnett said, "Thank you so much for this great opportunity and the great honor."

Lowry said, "Thank you so much for this great opportunity and the great honor." Burnett said, "Thank you so much for this great opportunity and the great honor."

AWARDS: 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration comes to close with awards ceremony at convention center

FROM PAGE 1A

award was Al Young of Berkeley Calif., a native of Ocean Springs.

Young, however, was unable to attend the ceremony because he was asked by the U.S. State Department to attend an international conference in Vienna, Austria, according to John D. W. Gules, of the University of Southern Mississippi, who presented the Wright awards.

"He began writing in 1946 and has been writing at a prodigious rate since then," Gules said of Young.

Young, the poet laureate of California, accepted the award by video, which was played during the ceremony. Young was raised in Ocean Springs.

"I'm delighted to accept the Richard Wright Award," Young said. "I thank Richard Wright from whom all these blessings flow."

Young has authored at least 18 books and has written a significant number of poems. He read three of his poems on

the video. He said he often reflects on his days in Mississippi for inspiration for his work.

Like Lowry, Young has won numerous awards for writing and been acclaimed in many reviews and periodicals.

A Vicksburg native, Charles Burnett, received the Horton Frost Award for Best Screenplay. The award was established by actor Gerald McRaney of Mississippi several years ago.

Burnett was described as "only one director of stature" produced by Mississippi, according to Ward Keating, director of the Mississippi Film Office, who presented the award to



Burnett

Burnett. "Charles Burnett is a pioneer not only of African-American film making, but a pioneer of independent film making," Keating said.

He, too, has won many awards for his

achievements, but none so special as the Horton Frost award, Burnett said.

"I was speechless (when nominated of the honor). This award has a profound significance for me," Burnett said.

He related a story about his professional life when a film executive rejected him and said he would never rise to the stature of Horton Frost, Academy Award-winning screenwriter and filmmaker.

"This award makes it all worthwhile," he said. "It validates — all those rejections."

Burnett's films center largely on themes of conflict and rejection, many with South-east settings.

In wrapping up the celebration, Winfrey praised Carolyn Vance Smith, NLCC founder and retired Co-Lin English teacher.

Winfrey encouraged participants to return for the 2008 NLCC whose theme is "Richard Wright, the South, and the World: A Continental Celebration" to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Wright's birth.



Beverly Lowry receives the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award from John D. Gules. Lowry and poet Al Young received this year's honors.

Natchez

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2007

NATCHEZ LITERARY AND CINEMA CELEBRATION

Songwriters to speak at NLCC

BY DAVID COCHRAN
OF THE NATCHEZ ADVERTISER

NATCHEZ — The 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration brings many talented and interesting people to town this week to speak on subjects related to this year's theme, "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

One of those talented and interesting people is Tricia Walker, who will speak 9 a.m. Saturday at the Natchez Convention Center, along with her friend and singer-songwriter, Davis Raines. Their presentation is called "Poetry for the People: The Lyrics of Country Music and American Social Change."

Walker grew up in Fayette, and spent 26 years in Nashville as a singer, songwriter, producer and music publisher.

"Tricia worked, taught, wrote songs, performed, recorded and generally amazed people for 20 years or more in Nashville," said Carolyn Vance Smith, founder and co-chairwoman of the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.

Last year, Walker moved back to Mississippi to work at Delta State University. She currently serves as the director of the school's Delta Mu



SEE SONGWRITERS, 1A

Sansing to talk about Lamar

BY JOAN GANDY
THE NATCHEZ ADVERTISER

NATCHEZ — A famous Mississippi statesman is an appropriate historical character to remember at the 2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, popular historian and professor Dr. David Sansing said.

A familiar speaker and participant at the celebration, Sansing, a professor emeritus of history at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, will present a program on L.Q.C. Lamar at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at the Natchez Convention Center, centering his remarks on the extraordinary command of the language exhibited by Lamar during his career.

The celebration is following a language theme: "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South." The programs today and Saturday begin at 9 a.m. with lectures related to the theme.

Sansing's lecture will follow one by U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran, whose talk will feature famous Southern voices heard in the Senate. "Lamar is such an intriguing character," Sansing said. "He is one of the most interesting characters I've met in American history."

Indeed, Sansing ranks Lamar as his "spectacular use of the language" right alongside

LQ LAMAR, 1A

SONGWRITERS: Fayette native to give presentation Sat.

FROM PAGE 1A

sic Institute.

"The Delta Music Institute is a recording and music industry program. We work on teaching students how to do digital recording and some other things related to music business opportunities. It was a good opportunity for me to come back home after 26 years," she said.

Walker said she is glad to be back home, and is looking forward to the conference.

"This is my fourth or fifth year to participate, but it's my first time giving a panel presentation," she said.

"I've always enjoyed the literary conference because I grew up so close to here. And particularly this year's theme, which has a lot to do with songwriting, provided the perfect opportunity for me to be a part of it."

"Davis and I are going to

"Not all songs are narratives that tell great stories. But I'm more attracted to the kind that do tell stories ... A good song will sound very conversational, like you're talking to somebody."

Tricia Walker

take a look at how changes (in society) are reflected through country music lyrics, from the 1950s to the present, and we'll also look at the themes in country music that reflect changes in lifestyle."

Walker said her favorite songs are the ones with that tell a story.

"Not all songs are narra-

tives that tell great stories," she said.

"But I'm more attracted to the kind that do tell stories. I find a lot of people who try to write songs too perfectly and at ends up sounding like an English paper. A good song lyric will sound very conversational, like you're talking to somebody. But you have to remember that words are only half of a song. To review and evaluate a song, you have to be listening to the music, as well as reading the words on the page because the music and the words really are married to each other."

While in Natchez, Walker and Raines will also perform at the Natchez Coffee Company. They will play there tonight at 7 and Saturday at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each and seating is limited. Contact the coffee company for more information.

Their presentation at the conference is free.

LAMAR: Famous Miss. statesman to be topic of Sansing's talk

FROM PAGE 1A

Abraham Lincoln as a memorable American.

Born in Georgia in 1825, Lamar moved to Oxford in 1846 to become chancellor of the University of Mississippi.

He returned to Georgia a few years later, practiced law and served in the Georgia House of Representatives.

In 1855, he returned to Oxford and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he was serving on the eve of the Civil War.

"Lamar wrote to the chancellor of the university, his mentor, and said, 'It looks like we're heading for war, and someone needs to make that speech,'" he said, thinking perhaps a powerful message could keep the union from breaking apart.

Lamar went on to tell his mentor that he thought he could make the speech but said that he didn't think he had "the

ego, the stature," Sansing said. "He didn't make the speech. And the war drove him to the depths of despair."

After the war, Lamar wondered whether a secessionist "could talk to this great nation and say we must come back together," Sansing said.

Lamar's chance came when Massachusetts Sen. Charles Sumner died in 1874.

Sansing said the response to Lamar's elegy is noteworthy. Newspapers and other publications spoke of the speech as "a blazing meteor," as one among "few speeches in American political history (to have) such overnight impact" and one that was sure to "ring through the country."

Sansing is involved in the restoration of the Lamar home in Oxford, recently purchased by the Oxford Historical Foundation.

And he is working on a book about the famous orator that he hopes to have completed

about the same time the house is ready for visitors in a couple of years.

After Lamar's famous speech, he wrote to his wife that what gave him greatest pleasure was that "my son was there to hear it."

Sansing will have a similar pleasure, he said. Roy Lee, Perry Sansing, president of the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television Board of Directors, will introduce the speech.

After the Civil War, Lamar remained quietly in Oxford until returning to Washington to the House of Representatives in 1873, where he served until 1877. He then served as a U.S. senator from 1877 to 1885.

He was appointed Secretary of the Interior in 1885 and then appointed to the U.S. Supreme court in 1888. He held that position until his death in 1890 and is the only Mississippian ever to serve on the Supreme Court, Sansing said.

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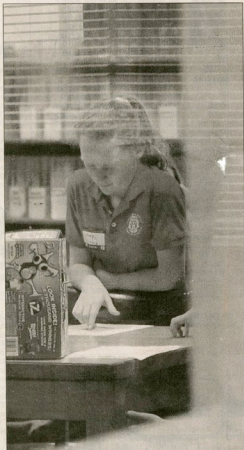
REGION

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2007

THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT

Mississippi's Best Community Daily Newspaper

Chocolate Milk Café



MARCUS FRALTER / THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT

Above left, Abby Chalmers rehearses her story before reading it in front of the audience during the Chocolate Milk Café Saturday at the Judge George W. Armstrong Library. At top right, William Anderson reads his story, "Baseball" to the audience. Above right, Mark LaFrancis listens closely to Ashton Leigh Mason as she reads her short story, "Fireworks With My Family." Eighteen young writers were selected out of 75 to read their award-winning short stories and poems at Saturday's event.



NATCHEZ LITERARY AND
CINEMA CELEBRATION

Spirituals highlighted at NLCC

By Mike Mason
Natchez, Miss.

Message — Spirituals left their mark on the people about our region, said Clarence Jones, a retired educator in Baton Rouge who has spent virtually the entire his career in the spiritual songs, spirituals.

Jones will be in Natchez this week to present "100 Years of Spirituals: The Spirituals of the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration" at the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration at 325 and 326 on Thursday at the Natchez Convention Center. A lot of more than a dozen hours during the four-day event devoted to the theme "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South." Jones hopes to have the best of spiritual songs about 30

SPIRITUALS: Retired educator brings message of spirituals to Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration

FROM PAGE 11

years ago, when he organized the Heritage Choir in Baton Rouge and began methodically to build a repertoire for the choir to sing nationally and internationally.

A highlight of his travels with the choir was singing for Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

It is a long way from the cotton fields to Rome, but the messages of spirituals are universal, Jones said.

"Sometimes the message is religious. Sometimes it is social. Sometimes it just tells truths about activities going on in the slave commu-

nity," he said.

The music remained important in the years after slaves were freed, he said. "We didn't get the forty acres and a mule we were promised. We didn't have any riches. All we had were the songs," Jones said.

The songs reminded the singers of the "trials and tribulations of the people. And they showed the kind of character we had to have to come through such experiences — a belief in God and a belief that God would carry us through," he said.

"Out of some very degrading experiences came songs of dignity, hope and belief."

Archivists have logged about 6,000 spirituals that have survived. "They weren't written down," Jones said.

The music was passed from generation to generation. And, like just and the blues, improvisation played a part in the ultimate form that became the written spiritual song manuscript.

"The element of improvisation bleeds over into the way we dance, the way we dress, the way we cook, the way we do our hair," Jones said.

"It came out of an experience of not having. We have no boundaries about the way we think about artistry or, for that matter, the way we think about things we need," he said.

Most music lovers hear spirituals as religious songs. Those who know the history hear more than that, Jones said.

"Sometimes the words were mixed to get messages out there about something the slaves didn't want the master to know," he said.

And sometimes the words that speak of the "after life do not always refer to heaven," Jones said. "Sometimes it's about the world after slavery."

The language of spirituals reflects two truths, he said. Slaves were not allowed to speak their own languages. And they were not taught to read.

"So they might not have been grammatically correct, but they knew how to communicate the message," he said.

Jones grew up in Morgan City, La., loving music in church and school and taking part in choir and band.

He attended Southern University and earned a degree in music and then spent years in education and in playing music for churches throughout Baton Rouge.

"I'm looking forward to coming to Natchez," he said. "I'm looking forward to telling about spirituals. This is something we're very proud of and something worth saying."

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TRACINGS

TODAY: **H.O.P.E. Recovery Ministry:** Christ-centered drug and alcohol abuse meeting will be held from 6 to 7 p.m. at Pilgrim Baptist Church. **Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office and Correctional Facilities:** Will have their first blood drive of 2007 from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Concordia Parish Community Center, Ferriday. LifeShare Blood Centers of Alexandria will conduct the drive. All donors may receive a Mardi Gras T-shirt. For information call 318-336-5231, 318-757-3162 or 318-386-2200.

Concordia Council on Aging, Inc.: Will have their monthly Senior Food Distribution at the Community Center, Hwy. 15 in Ferriday, between the hours of 8 to 10 a.m. for those seniors who have already qualified. Pickup time in Vidalia is between the hours of 9 and 11 a.m.

Adams County Cattleman's Association Annual Supper/Meeting for membership and recruitment: Will be held at 6:30 p.m. at Adams County Extension Service, 75A Carthage Point Road.

Greater Macedonia Baptist Church: Will host films, discussions and lectures to celebrate Black History Month. Jessie B. Williams and Rayford Batiste will share their memories, pictures and film on the Civil Rights struggle in Natchez. **The 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration:** Will begin at 9 a.m. at the Natchez Convention Center with free-morning programs. William A. Kretzschmar on Southern accents is at 9 a.m. Charles Reagan Wilson and Will Campbell on famous Southern preachers are at 10:30 a.m. Free afternoon programs are by Donald Katiganer on Faulkner's use of language at 2 p.m. and Clar-

SUBMIT A TRACING

Know about a non-profit event or announcement for our Tracings? Let us hear from you. Here's how and where to submit calendar items for Tracings:

ADDRESS: 503 N. Canal St. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

FAX: 601-442-7315.

E-MAIL: tracings@natchezdemocrat.com.

Please include a contact name and telephone number on all correspondence in case we have a question.

ence Jones on messages of Negro spirituals at 3:15 p.m. Supper sponsored by NAPAC is 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. \$15 at the door at Natchez Community Center. The Alcorn Choir concert at 7:30 p.m. is \$10 at the door at the Convention Center.

FRIDAY, FEB. 23

Ferriday Dixie Youth Baseball Registration: Will be from 3 to 7 p.m. at Ferriday Concordia Bank. Each player must bring a copy of his or her birth certificate. For information call 318-757-4773.

Pleasant Acre's Some-N-Special Shop: Will be open from 8 to 11 a.m. Household items are needed and may be brought to Pleasant Acre Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Knights of Columbus: Annual fried Catfish and Shrimp dinners will be available every Friday during Lent, Feb. 23 through April 6, from 5 to 7 p.m. Adult plates: catfish \$7, shrimp \$6. Child plates: catfish \$4,

shrimp \$3.50. Dinners include fries, hushpuppies and coleslaw. For grilled catfish, call 30 minutes ahead, 601-445-4311. Located in the Knights of Columbus building, corner of South Union and State Streets.

Natchez Little Theatre: In cooperation with the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will present "Twain by the Tale" at 8 p.m. at the Natchez Convention Center. All tickets are \$15 and may be reserved by calling NLCC at 601-446-1289.

Natchez Scottish Heritage Society: Will have their February meeting at 7 p.m. in the gymnasium at the First Presbyterian Church, 117 South Pearl. The program, "Backpacking through Scotland," will be presented by Dr. Charlie Leckie. Members should wear plaids, bring finger foods, and invite guests.

The 18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration: Will continue at 9 a.m. at the Natchez Convention Center with free morning programs. Suzanne Marrs on Eudora Welty is at 9 a.m. Kathleen Jenkins on the stories of Melrose is at 10:30 a.m. A humorous program by Robert St. John is at 11:30 a.m. and cost is \$10 at the door. Free afternoon programs are by Amanda LaFleur on French dialects of Louisiana at 2 p.m. and storytelling in the South by Diane Williams at 3:15 p.m. A free reception is 5 to 6 p.m. with "Twain by the Tale" at 8 p.m. The play is \$15 at the door at Convention Center.

The Thompson Head Start Center: Will present a Black History Program at 7 p.m. at Braden Auditorium, Homochitto Street. All staff are asked to dress in African attire.

MOVIES AND LITERATURE

Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration

The skinny: The 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration runs today through Sunday at the Natchez Convention Center.

The theme of this year's NLCC is "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South," which seeks to explore the importance of language in Southern literature and cinema.

Receiving the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award this year are Greenville native Beverly F. Lowry, author of *Harriet Tubman: Imagining a Life*, and Ocean Springs native Al Young, a California poet laureate.

Receiving the Horton Foote Award for Special Achievement in Screenwriting is Vicksburg native filmmaker Charles Burnett.

Here are some highlights of the four-day celebration (all events are free and at the Natchez Convention Center, unless otherwise noted):

Today

■ **9 a.m.** — Opening ceremonies with Copiah-Lincoln Community College President Howell Garner, former Gov. William F. Winter, Natchez Mayor Phillip West and



Special to The Clarion Ledger

Beverly F. Lowry will receive the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award at the 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.

others.

■ **2 p.m.** — "The Public and the Fictional: Faulkner's Use of Language" with Donald Kartiganer, Hovory chairman of Faulkner Studies, University of Mississippi.

■ **5:30 p.m.** — Reception and buffet supper hosted by the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture (at Natchez Community Center, \$15).

■ **7:30 p.m.** — "Rejoice and Sing," a concert of spirituals by the Alcorn State University Choir (\$10).

Friday

■ **9 a.m.** — "Public Asenore #1: Don't Take It Cernus: Endora Welty's Love of Word Play" with Suzanne Marrs, professor of English, Millsaps College.

■ **11:30 a.m.** — "How I Grew Up in the Deep South and Lived to Draw About It" with Robert St. John, newspaper columnist and food expert (\$10).

■ **3:15 p.m.** — "Storytelling in the South: A Way of Life" with Diana Williams, Arts Industry program director, Mississippi Arts Commission.

■ **8 p.m.** — *Twin by the Fall*, a play featuring Mark Twain's favorite anecdotes, presented by

DETAILS

- **What:** 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.
- **When:** Today through Sunday.
- **Where:** Natchez Convention Center, Natchez.
- **Cost:** Free, except where noted.
- **Phone:** (601) 445-1289 or www.cole.edu/nlcc

Natchez Little Theatre (\$15).

Saturday

■ **9 a.m.** — "Poetry for the People: The Lyrics of Country Music and American Social Change" with Tricia Walker, director, Delta Music Institute at Delta State University, with performance by Nashville singer-songwriter Davis Rains.

■ **1:30 p.m.** — "The Sound and the Fury: Southern Voices in the United States Senate" with Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss.

■ **5 p.m.** — Awards ceremony.

■ **7 p.m.** — Gala benefit reception and dinner (at The Briars mansion, \$125).

■ **8 p.m.** — Screening of *To Sleep with Anger* by Charles Burnett.

Sunday

■ **8:30 a.m.** and **11 a.m.** — Ellen Douglas writing workshops (at Co-Lin Community College, \$15).

— Corey Miller

#

OPINION

www.natchezdemocrat.com

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2007

Mississippi's Best Community Daily Newspaper

Twain's humor takes theater stage

Natchez Little Theatre is proud to present in cooperation with the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration the hilarious revue of Mark Twain's stories, "Twain by the Tale."

This exciting series of sketches and monologues is a brilliantly composed theater piece adapted by Dennis Snee with music by Gregg Saeger.

"Twain by the Tale" brings to life the unpredictable wit and timeless perceptions of the great humorist, Mark Twain. Done in Story Theatre and Thurber Carnival form, some of Twain's favorite targets are laid bare: bigots and bureaucrats, monarchs and moralists, cowardly duelists and frustrated suitors. Twain's unreserved, razor-sharp thoughts on friendship, vice, good breeding and politicians are also a part of this production. "Twain by the Tale" makes a delightful evening.

I am the director of this delightful piece with music provided by Darlene McCune and Casey Gilbert.

The multi-talented cast who perform numerous roles is comprised of John Ballard, Casey Gilbert, Rusty Jenkins, Darlene McCune, Gloria Neames, Ryan Dixon Richardson, Layne Taylor and Laurie Williams. My assistant director is James Gavette with addition-



**TOP
OF THE
MORNING**

Tommy
Jackson

al assistance from Rose Temple.

"Twain by the Tale" will be performed in conjunction with the Natchez Literary Cinema Celebration on Friday evening Feb. 23, at 8 p.m. at the Natchez Convention Center. Tickets for this performance are \$15 and should be reserved by contacting the NLCC at 601-446-1289. NLT grand benefactors and corporate sponsors may attend this performance for free.

"Twain by the Tale" will open at the Natchez Little Theatre auditorium at 319 Linton Ave. at

Maple Street on Saturday evening, Feb. 24, at 7:30 p.m., and close with a 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 25, matinee.

Tickets for the NLT productions are \$15 for adults and \$12 for senior citizens (60+) and youth (18 and under). For reservations for the NLT performances, please call 601-442-2233 or 1-877-440-2233 or visit the Web site at www.natchezlittletheatre.org.

Don't miss these dazzling performances and I look forward to seeing you at "Twain by the Tale."

TOMMY JACKSON is director of NLT's "Twain by the Tale."

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The Natchez Democrat

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2007

NLCC to start soon

Annual conference to
begin Wednesday

BY JULIE COTTRELL
THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — The 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration kicks off with a pre-conference session Wednesday. This year's theme is "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

The conference will focus on things such as storytelling and dialects, and how they are unique in the South.

THE DETAILS

The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration starts 11 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

starts with a pre-conference program at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez. See page 3A for a more in-depth schedule.

Diane Williams, storyteller and arts industry program director for the Mississippi Arts Commission in Jackson, will speak at the conference Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Her topic of choice is, "Storytelling in the South: A Way of Life."

A native of New Jersey now living in Madison, Williams said she enjoys the art of Southern storytelling and has

COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

William Winter Scholars chosen

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — The 2007 William Winter Scholars from colleges around Mississippi at the 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration Feb. 22-25. The designation honors former Mississippi Gov. William F. Winter, who has been the director of proceedings for the NLCC since its first year.

Richard and Saxon were chosen because of their interest in the NLCC and literary works. Richard has worked at Copiah-Lincoln since 2001, first as the Career and Technical Education Coordinator in the Willie Mae Dunn Library at Co-Lin Natchez.



Beth Richard, left, and Teviah Saxon, are this year's William Winter Scholars at Co-Lin in Natchez.

chez, Richard coordinates the Special Interest Class Program and the summer-time Kids College.

In 2006, Richard earned her master's degree in Library and Information Science at Mississippi State University. She received her bachelor of arts degree in psychology at Mississippi State University in

Laure Charles, La. A native of Sulphur, La., Richard is married to Allen Richard, and they have two daughters, Jordan and Kirby. Saxon is a 2006 graduate of Co-Lin Natchez, earning her associate in arts degree, but returning to Co-Lin Natchez for additional coursework. She is working toward a career in health care.

In April 2006, Saxon was inducted into the Co-Lin Natchez Hall of Fame, the highest honor of a student can achieve. Her sister, Danielle, also a Co-Lin Natchez graduate, is a 2002 Co-Lin Natchez Scholar.

At Co-Lin, Teviah Saxon has been involved in the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Circle K, the Spanish club and other organizations. In 2005, she was selected outstanding history student and outstanding Spanish 1 student.

She has been on the honors list each semester.

OPINION

www.natchezdemocrat.com

Mississippi's Best Community Daily Newspaper

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2007

Support the NLCC and win a big prize

Are you feeling lucky? For \$10 a chance, you could win one of four spectacular packages to be raffled during the upcoming Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, Feb. 22-24.

With your purchase, you will be supporting the NLCC's efforts to continue providing top-quality programs. This year's theme of Southern Acuity programs. This year's theme of Southern Acuity programs. This year's theme of Southern Acuity programs.

Come to the conference, and while you are in the Convention Center lobby stop by the raffle table and buy chances on the following packages.

The River Explorer Package, valued at more than \$5,000 and donated by the RiverBarge Excursion Lines Inc. of New Orleans, features an eight-day trip on the River Explorer, the only hotel day trip on America's waterways. The winner can choose a trip from an extensive list of itineraries in seven geographic regions.

The all-inclusive package includes hospitable accommodations with a river-view, all meals, snacks, coffee and soft drinks, all gratuities, taxes, port charges and scheduled shore activities. The port charges on board is terrific. The trip was regional food on board is terrific. The trip was regional food on board is terrific.

The Belk Home Package is full of wonderful items, just ready to help indulge the winner's desire to make a few changes around the house. Stop by and look at the spectacular display. Thanks to Belk manager Mary Flach and to Ron Kammerdeiner for putting this incredible package together.

The Looking Ahead to 2008 Package includes works by Richard Wright, the Natchez-born author whose 100th birthday is the theme of the 2008 conference, Richard Wright, the South and the World: A Centennial Celebration.

The winner will receive admission to all NLCC ticketed events in 2008, a certificate worth about \$100.

The Natchez Little Theatre, which in 2008 will produce a play adapted from Wright's "Native Son," has generously donated two Grand Benefactor Level tickets for the 2007-08 60th Diamond Jubilee Season.

Valued at \$180, it is a very special treat that



**TOP
OF THE
MORNING**

Maria

Bowser

lasts all year.

The books, theater, film and music package features a wide array of books, movies and CDs featuring works of speakers, award winners and others involved with the NLCC, including Jennifer Ogden, Tricia Walker, Davis Raines, Dr. Jerry Ward and Carolyn Vance Smith.

A real treat for past attendees is the special publication of the Southern Quarterly of the University of Southern Mississippi, featuring selected papers from last's year NLCC, which used the theme,

Southern food and drink.

Topping off the package is a photo session with T.G. McCary Photography, including an 11 x 14 portrait.

The generosity of many people and businesses has made these packages possible. Thanks to Eddie Conrad and the RiverBarge Excursions Lines Inc.; Mary Flach and Ron Kammerdeiner of Belk in Natchez; Layne Taylor and the Natchez Little Theatre; Charles Hall of Cover to Cover; Lorra Maxwell at Maxwell Printing; Tim McCary; and Kathy Stephens, Elliot Ernst, Sim Calton, Sue Moesser and my good buddies, the Divine Divas of Raffles, Micki Hartley, Linda Ogden and Shirley Petkovsek.

Now that you are clutching your rabbit's foot, how do you go about buying a raffle ticket? Call me at 601-445-2153 or purchase tickets in the lobby at the Natchez Convention Center during the NLCC. Our raffle team will sell chances during conference hours beginning at 8:30 a.m., Feb. 22. The drawing will be at 4 p.m., Feb. 24. You do not have to be present to win.

And, just so everyone is a winner, with each raffle ticket comes a coupon good for one free book at the Friends of the Library book sales. Lucky or not, who can resist a free book?

Support a worthy cause. Support the award-winning NLCC. Buy a raffle ticket and keep your fingers crossed!

MARIA BOWSER is a member of the NLCC advisory board.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2007

NATCHEZ LITERARY AND CINEMA CELEBRATION

Event to kick off program Feb. 2

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — A self-described "storyweaver," Diano Williams, of Jackson, will kick off the 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration with a pre-conference program at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez.

The program will take place 1 a.m., Feb. 21, in the W. L. Nelson Multi-Purpose Room in the Redd Watkins Career and Technical Education Center.

Williams' program, "Storytelling in the South: A Way of Life," relates directly to the theme of this year's conference, Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South.

Williams, an author, editor, workshop presenter and arts director for the Mississippi Arts Commission, likes to say she is "a keeper of treated tales, collector of phrases of a griot."

Pronounced "gree-oh," a griot is a West African poet, praise singer and wandering musician with a repository of oral tradition, Williams said.

As such, they are sometimes called bards," she said.

Griots today live in many parts of West Africa, including Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Senegal, she said. The word may have come from the French translation "griot" of the Portuguese "criado," which in



Williams

turn means vanguard.

As a griot, she shares stories from books, oral tales, myths, and ends and fables, Williams said. "Many of my stories are original."

Williams has told stories around the United States as far away as Hawaii, Germany and Africa.

Winner of statewide recognition by the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts as well as the Mississippi Humanities Council, Williams won the National Storytelling Network Oracle Award for Region Leadership and Service, the National Storytelling Center (second runner-up) and a scholarship and research grant from the National Storytelling Network.

Williams has appeared on numerous television stations in Mississippi and has been heard on dozens of radio stations. She is co-host of the Mississippi Arts Hour's WLEZ-FM radio in Jackson.

She has performed for hundreds of organizations and groups in the United States and Germany. She is author of an intermediate children's book, Annie Mae Jumps the Broom, and two audiocassettes.

Richard Wright discussions still coming

destination as you, but faster. Several copies of the books are on order for you at Armstrong Library. The February reading is Land Today. While you're there, pick up Native Son and Rite of Passage. The readings for March and April are The Outsider and Ask Marianne or Christine to give you a copy of the discussion questions. All the better to prepare you, my dear!

The Feb. 25 reading is from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. March readings go from 1 to 5 p.m. There's a midday break during every session with complimentary refreshments. Think about attending! These next two sessions are in the middle of Lent and football's over.

Reading Richard Wright on the eve of his 100th birthday is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, The Natchez Richard Wright Centennial Celebration Committee and is partially funded by the Mississippi Humanities Council.



TOP OF THE MORNING

Sunday at the Natchez Co-Lin campus in the Nelson Multi-Purpose Room and next Saturday at Natchez Museum, 301 Main St. Natchez, you can once again for your first time participate in a stimulating, year-long series of readings by Richard Wright. You may openly and freely discuss and debate the works or actively listen to a variety of individuals from far and near who enthusiastically "graw it to the bone," for lack of a better description.

Who's Richard Wright? You asked that, didn't you? Richard Wright is one of America's most recognized and critically acclaimed writers, a black Mississippi son whose two paternal and two maternal grandparents were born into slavery. The sessions are in celebration of the 100th anniversary of his birth in 1908, close to Natchez. They're free, open to the public and coincide, not accidentally, with the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration and Black History Celebration.

Dr. Jerry Ward, professor of English and African American Studies, directed the program. He is relaxed, friendly, lively and unimposing, which greatly appeals to people like me, not you, of course, who kind of skim through things looking for the beef, convinced we'll get to the same

JACK KELLY is a Natchez resident.

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Bits of NLCC rearranged for crowds

You've heard of bad problems and good problems.

Thank goodness, the 18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration has only one problem, and it's a good one.

We were at first worried that we had more people wanting to attend a couple of this year's events than we could accommodate, but the wonderful citizens of Natchez helped us solve this problem. Three activities have been rearranged to accommodate larger crowds.

First, a reception and supper previously planned to take place at the Natchez Museum of African American History and Culture on Main Street has been moved to the Natchez Community Center, 215 Franklin St.

This party is from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 22. Tickets are \$15.

NAPAC President LeRoy White and his board members voted unanimously to move the event after about 150 tickets were sold by mid-January. The museum can accommodate only 200 people in shifts of 100 each, whereas the Community Center can accommodate up to 300 people at one time. Also, as a helpful act, the NAPAC board agreed to open the NAPAC Museum free of charge on Sat., Feb. 24, so the exhibits can still be enjoyed.

Second, a program by humorist, restaurateur and author Robert St. John of Hattiesburg, has created a traffic jam. Hundreds of people want tickets! Originally this program was to take place after lunch at the Carriage House at Stanton Hall. However, after 225 tickets were snapped up and the event was sold out, many people were disappointed. Because of this the NLCC Steering Committee decided to move the program to the Natchez Convention Center, where up to 450 people can be seated. Mr. St. John will speak there at 11:30 a.m., Fri., Feb. 23. Tickets for the program only are now available at \$10.

Those holding tickets for both the program and the luncheon will attend the program first at the Convention Center and then have lunch at the Carriage House.

Third, a beautiful reception and buffet supper at The Briars, overlooking the Mississippi River, was limited to 100 people, but those tickets flew out the door. The wonderful people we are working with at The Briars, John Parks, Wendy



TOP OF THE MORNING

Beth
Richard

Grandin and Dan Bland, are now allowing us to host 150 people. This benefit event costs \$125, with \$100 tax-deductible.

What is creating all the excitement about this year's NLCC? Maybe it's the theme: "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South." All of us in the South love to talk, and maybe people want to come together to learn more about that particular trait.

Whatever the reason, we welcome everyone. Most of the award-winning conference is free, Thursday through Sunday, Feb. 22-25.

Lectures, films, discussion sessions, exhibits, book signings and receptions will take place at conference headquarters, the Natchez Convention Center, 211 Main St.

For those few events that are ticketed, in addition to the above events, plenty of tickets remain since space is unlimited. They are:

► A concert by the Alcorn State University Choir, 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 22, \$10, Convention Center

► A Mark Twain play, 8 p.m., Fri., Feb. 23, \$15, Convention Center

► Ellen Douglas Writing Workshops, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Sun., Feb. 25, \$15, Copiah-Lincoln Community College

To buy tickets to any of the events above, e-mail me at beth.richard@colin.edu or call me at 601-446-1289 or toll-free 866-296-6522. Or visit the Web site, www.colin.edu/nlcc.

The NLCC is sponsored by Co-Lin, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. Partial funding comes from the Mississippi Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Those groups and their many supporters make most of the conference free of charge.

NLCC tickets can be picked up at the information desk in the lobby of the Convention Center from 8:30 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 22, until 4 p.m., Sat., Feb. 24.

See you at the NLCC!

BETH RICHARD is the NLCC Ticket and Information chairman.

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Wright scholar to lead NLCC discussion

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — One of Richard Wright's novels, *Loved Today*, will be the topic of a session led by Wright scholar Jerry W. Ward Jr., professor of English at Dillard University, New Orleans, during the 10th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, Feb. 22-25.

The free session will take place from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. Feb. 25 at the Nelson Multi-Purpose Room at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 28 Campus Dr.

It is the second in a year-long series of monthly sessions devoted to Wright's works.

Wright, born near Natchez in 1898, will be recognized at the 2008 NLCC as well as around the world during the centennial of his birth next year.

"It is important that Natchez read and know the works of this famous native son," Ward said.

Wright's most famous books are *Native Son* and *Black Boy*, both of which have sold hundreds of thousands of copies and are frequently studied in high school and college literature classes. "*Loved Today* is a very important early novel," Ward said.

"My interest in all Wright's books, including *Loved Today*, is longstanding," Ward said.



THE DETAILS

JERRY W. WARD JR., professor of English at Dillard University and a Richard Wright scholar, will lead a discussion on "*Loved Today*" from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 25.

Both scholar and author, Ward holds a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, where his dissertation focused on Richard Wright, his works and his American critics.

Ward recently completed new research in the Richard Wright papers at Yale University.

"*Loved Today* is not set in the South, though it has Southern characters and Southern uses of language, such as playfulness and references to folklore," he said.

"Most people in the book are living in Chicago, but they are from the South," Ward said. "In fact, I will explain how certain portions of Wright's autobiography, *Black Boy*, are fictionalized in his portrait of Jake Jackson in *Loved Today*."

Wright completed *Loved Today* in 1936. "In it he experimented with modernism and deliberately imitated James Joyce," Ward said.

"The book takes place in one day, Abraham

Lincoln's birthday. Big questions that result from reading the book are, 'What did happen with the Emancipation Proclamation? Did Lincoln really free slaves? Or was the proclamation an interesting military strategy to break the back of the Confederacy?'

"These and other discussion questions will be addressed during the session Feb. 25," Ward said. Other questions include:

- Did Wright make effective use of style and techniques in this novel?

- Does Wright's "use of radio broadcasts, card games, historical references and his parodies of political systems, '120 as Yoshinobu Hakutani claims in Richard Wright and Racial Discourse, seem ill-suited for the one dimensional characterization of the protagonist?"

- What does this apprentice novel reveal about Wright's interest in psychology and sociology?

- What use does Wright make of African American folklore in the novel?

- What do the irony and satire in the novel encourage readers to conclude about Jake Jackson?

Ward's intense interest in Richard Wright's works stems from reading the works in college.

he said. "When I read *Black Boy* it was an epiphany," Ward said. "It was 'Wow!'

"I never met this man, who was much older than I, but our experiences growing up as Blacks were similar. Some similarities Ward cited are:

- Being taunted for reading so much
- Suffering from efforts inside and outside the family to stunt intellectual growth

- Knowledge they had to be ourselves
- Deep interest in stories heard
- Deep interest in writing stories

"It is very appropriate that this discussion session take place during Black History Month," Ward said. "This is an opportune time to pay attention to Black Mississippians who have made achievements in the world."

The 2007 Literary Celebration and its theme of "Southern Language" is an ideal opportunity to talk about Richard Wright and his use of language, Ward said.

"My passion is to ensure that Richard Wright is very well known in Mississippi," Ward said.

"People ask, 'Who is Richard Wright?' And they are Mississippians. Some people read his works in high school and college, but his is not a household name like William Faulkner or Eudora Welty.

"Our effort is to establish Richard Wright's name so he is recognized in 2008 and beyond. The year-long reading series is trying to do just that."

The NLCC is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

Partial funding for the conference comes from Mississippi Humanities Council and National Endowment for the Humanities.

Information about the Richard Wright reading series can be found at www.coln.edu/nlcc or by calling Charles Merrill, chairman of the Natchez Richard Wright Centennial Committee.

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CLARIONLEDGER.COM

Eatery's biscuits give rise to hope

The fondest food memories of my youth are drawn from my grandmother's house.

For 70-plus years my paternal grandmother lived in a large white house on an oak-lined, brick-paved street in my hometown of Hattiesburg. Her home



Robert St. John

had 13-foot ceilings, Oriental rugs, crystal chandeliers, European antiques and a window-unit air conditioner in every room. I spent many days propped on a stool in the kitchen next to the window unit watching her fry chicken, roast lamb or roll biscuit dough.

Summer lunches were eaten in the breakfast room. The formal dining room was reserved for special occasion evening meals and Sunday lunches. I spent almost every Sunday lunch for the first 18 years of my life in that dining room.

Revolving menu

The Sunday lunch menu was on a revolving schedule. One Sunday we'd eat roast beef, the next week she would serve fried chicken. Turkey and dressing made a once-a-month appearance and was not reserved for Thanksgiving alone. My favorite meal in that house — roasted leg of lamb — was served at least once a month.

The vegetables changed weekly. The starch was usually rice and gravy, though mashed potatoes made an appearance on fried chicken day. Iced tea was served in sterling silver goblets.



Related item:

Recipe of the week:
Natchez's Carriage House Restaurant Biscuits

The one constant, week in-week out, were her biscuits. The woman could bake biscuits.

The biscuits were very small — about the size of a silver dollar — and light and good.

I could eat a dozen of them.

She served mint jelly on lamb day, but my brother and I always opted for grape jelly — not for the lamb, but for all the biscuits we consumed. We called it "plain jelly." I am not sure why, unless we thought mint jelly was "fancy."

I have tried to replicate my grandmother's biscuits for years, to no avail. She never wrote down her recipe and unfortunately, I never asked for it. Two cookbooks ago my sous chef and I spent almost two weeks trying to recreate my grandmother's biscuits, but we hit dead end after dead end.

In the almost 20 years since her death, I have not eaten a biscuit as good as my grandmother's. Until last week.

Carried away

I was a guest speaker at the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration. Included with the admission to my speech was a luncheon at Stanton Hall's Carriage House Restaurant.

While eating and visiting with my hosts, someone passed a plate of little biscuits. Even though they were small, I was polite and took only one. I placed it on my plate where I forgot about it until midway through the meal. When I finally took a bite, I was stunned. "That's it!" I said.

My hosts asked the server for one more plate. The server brought two. I threw manners out the window and put three biscuits on my plate. Someone passed the butter and then the man next to me handed me a small bowl of grape preserves — plain jelly.

Apparently, word of my substantial biscuit consumption made its way to the restaurant's manager, who handed me a recipe card on my way out the door and invited me for a return visit.

I haven't prepared the Carriage House Restaurant's biscuit recipe, yet. But if they're anywhere close to the ones I ate last week in Natchez, a two-decade search is over.

Robert St. John is an author, chef, restaurateur and world-class eater. He can be reached at www.narg.com or www.robertstjohn.com.

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TODAY

Women of Excellence International: Will have a Prophetic Conference, "A Gathering of Prophets" at 5 p.m. at the Carriage House Restaurant, Queen Room, at Stanton Hall. Admission is free. For information call 601-597-5388 or 601-431-1377.

The Junior Auxiliary River City Run for the Kids: Pre-registration will be at 7:30 a.m. at Memorial Park on Main Street. Race activities will include a 10k-run and 5k-walk at 8:30 and a one mile fun run for kids 12 and under beginning at 9:30 a.m. Pre-registration forms can be picked up at Mainstream Fitness and at Natchez Rehab. Pre-registration fees are \$15 for adults and \$5 for kids. Race day fee will be \$20. For information call 601-304-1602 or caramoody@bellsouth.net.

West Feliciana Parish Library and the Friends of the West Feliciana Library: Will present "A Celebration of Readers and Writers": Codrescu, Cullen, Domingue and Hill, at the Oxbow Restaurant in St. Francisville. The public is invited.

Ferriday Dixie Youth Baseball Registration: Will be from 3 to 7 p.m. at Ferriday Concordia Bank. Each player must bring a copy of his or her birth certificate. For information call 318-757-4773.

Fourth Street Church of Christ: Will sponsor a Women's Conference, Theme: Lord Take Over My Makeover, beginning with 8:30 a.m. registration and a Continental breakfast. Guest speaker will be Carolyn Upkins from Hanging Moss Road Church of Christ in Jackson. Call 601-442-2977 for information.

Zion Hill Baptist Church No. 1 Youth Department: Will have their Black History Program at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited.

Roxie United Methodist Church: Will have their 120th Year Anniversary Celebration at 1 p.m. Guest speaker will be Hope Morgan Ward, the Bishop of the Mississippi Annual Conference. Refreshments will be served.

Natchez Little Theatre: In cooperation with the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will present "Twain by the Tale" at 7:30 p.m. at the Natchez Little Theatre, 319 Linton Avenue. Adult tickets are \$15. Senior Citizens and Youth tickets are \$12. Call 601-442-2233 or 1-877-440-2233 or visit www.natchezlittletheatre.org for reservations.

Vidalia Girls Softball League: Will have registration from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Recreation Center Feb. 24 and March 3 in Vidalia. Certified umpires are needed. Those interested may call 601-431-4768 or

SUBMIT A TRACING

Know about a non-profit event or announcement for our Tracings? Let us hear from you. Here's how and where to submit calendar items for Tracings:

ADDRESS: 503 N. Canal St. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

FAX: 601-442-7315.

E-MAIL: tracings@natchezdemocrat.com.

Please include a contact name and telephone number on all correspondence in case we have a question.

601-870-6003.

Zion Flower Baptist Church: Will have a "Benefit Praise Service" for Dorothy Bates at 6:30 p.m. featuring the Rev. J.L. Hammitte and the Greater Faith Worship Center Mass Choir. The public is invited.

Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church, Concordia Park: Will have a combined African American program at 6 p.m. The program will benefit Evangelist Susie Shorter Scholarship Fund. Guest speaker will be Rosa Demby.

The TRIAD Organization: Will have an important meeting at 10 a.m. at Zion Flower Baptist Church. Members from Milford, Daughters of Zion, and Second Union Baptist Churches and St. Paul AME Church and other visitors are welcome.

The 18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration: Continues at 9 a.m. at the Natchez Convention Center with free morning programs. One by Tricia Walker and Davis Raines on country music lyrics is a 9 a.m. Todd Sanders on the stories on the newly remodeled Federal Courthouse is at 10:15 a.m. Free tours of the courthouse are 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free afternoon programs are by U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran and David Sansing at 1:30 p.m. on famous Southern accents is at 3:15 p.m. A free reception is 4 to 5 p.m. with awards ceremony at 5 p.m. A benefit reception and supper at The Briars is at 6:30 p.m., \$125 with \$100 tax-deductible.

Adams County 4-H: Will have their Shooting Sports enrollment and practice for ages 8 to 12 from 8 a.m. to noon at the Adams County Extension Service.

John R. Lynch Providence Community Reunion Club: Will have their first annual "Meet and Greet" meeting at 6 p.m. at Providence Baptist Church. All members and urged to attend and bring a

neighbor.

Adams County 4-H Leadership Club: Will meet at 11 a.m. at the Extension office. Open to youth ages 13 to 18. Call 601-445-8201 for information.

Saint Peter Baptist Church Youth Bible Study: Will be at 2 p.m. All youth are urged to attend.

SUNDAY, FEB. 25

Women of Excellence International: Will have a Prophetic Conference, "A Gathering of Prophets" at 5 p.m. at the Carriage House Restaurant, Queen Room, at Stanton Hall. Admission is free. For information call 601-597-5388 or 601-431-1377.

AJFC Community Action Agency, Inc. Head Start Mass Registration: Applications are being taken from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Thompson Head Start Center, 1038 North Union Street, for children ages 3 and 4 who will have their third birthday on or before Sept. 1, 2007 regardless of race, gender, creed, national origin or disability condition. For information call 601-445-8878.

New Zion No. 1 Baptist Church: Will begin having their communion service every Sunday at 7 p.m. Members and friends are invited to attend.

Natchez Little Theatre: In cooperation with the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will present "Twain by the Tale" at 2 p.m. at the Natchez Little Theatre, 319 Linton Avenue. Adult tickets are \$15. Senior Citizens and Youth tickets are \$12. Call 601-442-2233 or 1-877-440-2233 or visit www.natchezlittletheatre.org for reservations.

The 18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration: Will conclude with Ellen Douglas Writing Workshops at Copiah-Lincoln Community College, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Stephen Sloan on oral history is at 8:30 a.m. and costs \$15. Jerry W. Ward Jr., on Richard Wright's novel, *Lawd Today*, is at 11 a.m. and is free as part of the 2007 Richard Wright Reading Series.

Hickory Block United Methodist Church, Union Church: Will have their annual Black History Program beginning with a line up at 9:30 a.m. Wear old fashion clothes, African attire, bonnets, etc. The public is invited.

Free AARP Tax Aide: Income tax returns prepared each Wednesday, Feb. 7 through April 11, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Armstrong Library for taxpayers with low and middle income, with special attention to those age 60 and older. Bring necessary documents. Free e-filing for Mississippi and Louisiana returns.

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page 32

Library working on many projects

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — Your Library has a collection of old Natchez newspapers on microfilm.

If you've ever been here looking at our microfilm, you know how uncomfortable it can get looking through reels of microfilm.

We recently received a grant funded through the Mississippi Library Commission to digitize our collection and make it available on computers and online.

Getting old newspapers on the computer

The first step in this process is to use specially designed equipment that we purchased with our grant funds to scan the microfilm and convert it to a digital image, which is just like a picture of the newspaper pages.

However, you can't use a picture to search for particular names or subjects.

In order to be able to search, the pictures have to be converted to text. This second step will be a very time consuming process.

We are ready to start the first step and are looking for volunteers to help us.

Volunteers will be trained to use the equipment and then sign up on a schedule to work on the project.

If we are able to train sufficient volunteers, we could complete this step in a few months and make the images available to the public.

The only qualification for volunteers is a familiarity with computers.

If you're interested in helping with this exciting project, please contact the

What's happening! @ your library

library.

Movies for teens

Recent studies have shown teens to be one of the most underserved groups in the public library.

They know they can come in for homework help and research references, however they also equate libraries with "forced reading."

Your library wants to bring literature to all the kids in Natchez and Adams County and to show them libraries can be a fun place to come.

After all, these young people will be our future tax payers and hopefully library supporters.

Your library has been discussing ways to get teens in the library.

One idea is to offer them a movie night with soda and popcorn.

Libraries across the nation have discovered many ways to provide both fun and educational uses for movies, and in return they have developed a growing response from the local youth.

Your library has just purchased a Public Performance Site License, thanks to the generosity of The Friends of the Library.

This allows us an unlimited number of showings of copyrighted entertainment movies, so we can incorporate movies legally into our programming. The license covers the entire library facility for showings by the staff, and it also allows out-

side groups to host a movie event or meeting at the library.

Although we will initially use this to attract teens to the library, its potential is unlimited. We can make the Armstrong Library a place, not only to find books or research materials, but also a community gathering center. Let us hear your ideas for using this license.

Chocolate Milk Café

Once again, your Library hosted the Chocolate Milk Café during the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.

This year's event was entitled "Young Writers Explore Their Roots" and featured readings of original writings by area school children.

It was held Saturday, February 24 at 2:30 pm, and refreshments were provided by the Natchez Market, Dairy Queen and the Friends of the Library.

Library information

The Natchez Adams Wilkinson Library Service consists of three branches: Armstrong Library in Natchez (the headquarters of the library system), Van Cleave Library in Centerville, and Woodville Public Library in Woodville.

The Armstrong Library is located at 220 South Commerce St. in Natchez, and is open Monday through Thursday from 9-6, Friday from 9-5, and Saturday from 9-1.

You can call us at 601.445.8862, email us at armstrong@naw.lib.ms.us or visit us online www.naw.lib.ms.us.

THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 2007

AL

democrat.com

8A THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ LITERARY AND CINEMA CELEBRATION

Wright reading series to meet Saturday

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — The June Richard Wright reading series meeting will be 1:30-3:30 p.m., Saturday at the Historic Natchez Foundation, 108 S. Commerce St.

Wright's book to be discussed this month is *Eight Men*.

Dr. Jerry W. Ward, Jr., of Dillard University, New Orleans, will lead the discussion.

Free copies of the book are available at the Armstrong Library.

The monthly series of

readings and discussion sessions is sponsored by Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, and Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture.

The series is in preparation for the 100th celebration in 2008 of Richard Wright's birth near Natchez.

The series also is in preparation for the 19th annual NLCC, Feb. 21-24, 2008, which will use the theme of "Richard Wright, the South, and the World: A Centennial Celebration."



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Jerry W. Ward, bottom, will lead a discussion on Richard Wright at 1:30 p.m. Saturday.

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Sid Salter

Scholar chronicles the late Willie Morris' life

It's been more than 25 years since I met Willie Morris on the sidelines at Philadelphia High School's Harpole Stadium.

We were both there to cover the same story — the PHS football phenom Marcus Dupree. I was doing a one-shot *STV* magazine piece for a now-defunct publication called *The SEC Sports Journal*.

Willie was there doing research for a book on the athlete and the tortured past of the young man's hometown.

I knew who Morris was on a cursory level. I'd read *North Toward Home* at my mother's insistence. Morris had served as a babysitter in Yazoo City a few times for Willie and his childhood friend Ralph Atkinson Jr. — her nephew, the son of her older sister.



Salter
Perspective
editor

My mother, who spent 40 years of her life teaching English in Mississippi public schools, later told me that Willie was a writer whose talent should be mentioned in the same league with William Faulkner, Eudon Welby and Richard Wright.

She was right. I was hooked two pages into *North Toward Home* and became a lifelong fan of Willie's work. I never entertained the thought that I would later come to know Willie Morris as a friend.

But in the early 1980s, we developed an abiding friendship best described in a current Owen Wilson movie title — *You, Me and Dupree*.

My *STV* magazine story was a long-forgotten profile on a marvelously talented athlete who attended my old high school.

Willie's book, *The Courtship of Marcus Dupree*, was a Christopher Award-winning examination of big-time college football recruiting against the backdrop of Mississippi's historic struggles with questions of race, class and heritage. The book holds up well after 25 years, despite a premature, almost surreal end to Dupree's athletic career.

Our friendship was enduring and we had fun together. It was Willie who introduced me to my longtime friend and business partner, Gale Drusley of Bruce, at Clyde Goolsby's Holiday Inn bar in Oxford in 1981.

Willie's son, David, later worked for me in Forest at The Scott County

Times. It was a forerunner to David's solid career as a photojournalist and documentarian.

When my daughter was born, Willie sent her copies of a few of his books meticulously inscribed with long notes from "Uncle Willie." He continued to send these offerings to Kate through the publication of *New York Days*.

Our last long visit came in Natchez at the 1996 Natches Literary Festival where I was a panelist and he received the Richard Wright Medal for Literary Excellence. We spent that sunny afternoon in a bar reliving our adventures from the Dupree days and I saw in Willie a place that I'd never seen before — a place I've always attributed to the steady influence of his smart, good wife JoAnne Prichard.

Willie died Aug. 2, 1998, son. Earlier this year, Willie's friend Larry L. King's biography called *In Search of Morris*.

King claimed to offerwarts-and-all examination of life. The result, however, is something somewhat meandering.

A far better biography, more valuable reference to and work of one of Mississippi's favorite literary sons is released *Willie Morris: A Life* by Jack Ralston & Co., \$75.

The body of Willie's works — 23 books and a newspaper and magazine spanning from *The Daily* 1955 during his college days

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Wright's works to be discussed

"Reading Richard Wright on the Eve of His 100th Birthday" is the title of a year-long series of monthly sessions with the goal of encouraging hundreds of Natchez-area citizens to read, study, discuss and understand numerous books by Richard Wright, 1908-1960.

Born near Natchez, Wright is noted for two novels, *Native Son*, published in 1940 and an immediate success, and *Black Boy*, a fictionalized 1945 autobiography that sold 400,000 copies within three months, said Carolyn Vance Smith, long-time educator at Co-Lin.

Smith was instrumental in arranging the discussion series, which will be led by Jerry W. Ward Jr., Dillard University,

New Orleans, La., a noted Richard Wright scholar.

During childhood, Wright left Natchez to live in Jackson, Miss., Smith said. Later he lived in Memphis, Tenn., Chicago, Ill., New York, N.Y., and Paris, France, where he died in 1960.

Wright returned to Natchez often as a child and later as a young adult, at one time living and working near Natchez, Smith said.

"His experiences in Natchez helped inspire and formulate much of the background of his works," she said.

"As the centennial of Wright's birth looms in 2008, the world will be reading and studying the famed writer's books,"

Smith said. "It is important for people who still live where Wright was born to be as informed and aware as possible of the man, his writings, and his lasting influence."

Among Wright's numerous books are novels, short stories, poetry and essays. Each month during the discussion series in 2007, a separate book (or books) will be read and discussed at venues all over Natchez and Adams County.

One of the sites for the discussion series is Co-Lin Natchez. The session will be Feb. 25, 2007, during the 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.

N-Sights - September 2006

17

NLCC gearing up for 2007 celebration

The right word can make us laugh, cry, sing along, be inspired... In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing.

"To explore the way we talk in the South, the 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will use the theme of 'Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South,'" said Carolyn Vance Smith, longtime educator at Copiah-Lincoln Community College.

Smith and Co-Lin founded the NLCC in 1990. The conference, which has won national awards for humanities programming, is free of charge. It annually attracts hundreds of people who love books and the opportunity to talk about them, Smith said.

Conference dates are Feb. 22-25, 2007, with headquarters at the Natchez Convention Center. Programs away from the Convention Center will be at Co-Lin, Natchez High, Armstrong Public Library and elsewhere.

A highlight of the conference is a program by U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), Washington, D.C., called "The Sound and the Fury: Southern



www.colin.edu/nlcc

Voices in the United States Senate."

Other programs will address Southern speech as used by famous orators, characters in the works of Richard Wright and William Faulkner, the writings of humorists such as Mark Twain and Robert St. John, and the orations of preachers such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Billy Graham.

Also to be discussed are dialect and messages in music of spirituals, how Hollywood approaches Southern accent in films, tales and humor used by Mark Twain, and much more, Smith said. Films, concerts, a play, receptions, meals, writing workshops, book-signings and a writing award ceremony will also be included in the event.

Co-sponsors are Co-Lin, the Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

Looking Ahead to 2008

The 2008 NLCC will celebrate Natchez native RICHARD WRIGHT

*Two Grand Benefactor Level Tickets for the 60th Diamond Jubilee Season (2007-2008), compliments of the Natchez Little Theater (value of \$180)- This includes tickets to every performance of the season. [The February production will be Richard Wright's *Native Son*.]*

Complimentary admission for one to ticketed events of the 19th Annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, February 21-24, 2008: "Richard Wright (1908-1960), the South, and the World: A Centennial Celebration."

*A Richard Wright sampler including a framed poster, an audio book of *Black Boy* and a collection of his most well-known works.*

**THE NATCHEZ LITERARY AND
CINEMA CELEBRATION**
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UNIVERSITY CONCERT
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in a

**FESTIVAL OF
SPIRITUALS**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2007
St. Mary Minor Basilica
Natchez, Mississippi
7:00 p.m.**

N-Sights

November/December 2006

Vol. 34, No. 2

The campus newspaper of **Copiah-Lincoln Community College Natchez**

NLCC to host Richard Wright discussions

The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will host a year-long series of discussions on the works of Richard Wright.

The first program will be Jan. 17 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Alcorn State University's Natchez Campus.

Wright's book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," will be discussed. All sessions will be free and open to the public and will be led by Dr. Jerry Ward, professor of English/African World Studies at Dillard University in New Orleans. The discussions

will lead up to the 2008 centennial of Wright's birth.

Co-Lin will host a session Feb. 25 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. based on Wright's book, "Lured Today," in conjunction with the 2007 NLCC program.

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NATCHEZ LITERARY AND CINEMA CELEBRATION

Event to focus on Southern language

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — The 18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration is set for Feb. 22-27 at the Natchez Convention Center. The annual conference is devoted to exploring various angles of Southern history and culture.

This year's theme will be "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

"In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing," said Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez, and co-chairman of the NLCC. "Because language is so important, in 2007 we'll explore the way Southerners talk and write, and, at the same time, we'll learn interesting aspects of the history and culture of our part of the country."

Words in the South might differ from region to region, but everywhere they are fascinating and often profoundly moving, Smith said.

Most of the conference is

THE DETAILS

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
call 601-446-1208.

free because of support from the four sponsoring agencies, which are Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

Funding also comes through grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Mississippi Humanities Council.

Co-chairmen of the conference with Smith are Kathleen Jenkins of Natchez National Historical Park, Jim Barnett of Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Marie Antoon of Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

To serve as director of proceedings for the 18th year is William F. Winter, president of the board of trustees, Mississippi Department of Archives

and History.

Some of the free programs include:

▶ A two-part session on Southern orators in the United States Senate by Thad Cochran, U.S. Senate (R-Miss.), and David G. Sansing, University of Mississippi

▶ A two-part session on famous Southern preachers by Charles Reagan Wilson, University of Mississippi, and Will Campbell, author of Mississippi and Tennessee

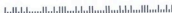
▶ Southern accents across the South by William A. Kretzschmar Jr., director of the linguistics program, University of Georgia

▶ William Faulkner's use of language by Faulkner scholar Donald Kartiganer, University of Mississippi

▶ Eudora Welty's love of word play by Welty scholar Suzanne Marrs, Millsaps College, Jackson.

▶ Dialect and messages of Negro spirituals by Clarence Jones, East Baton Rouge High School, and director, Heritage Choir

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3300253
CAROLYN VANCE & MARION SMITH
270 FOSTER MOUND RD
NATCHEZ MS 39120-9065

David Halberstam, 1934-2007

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist David Halberstam, who delivered the dedicatory address for the William F. Winter Archives and History Building in 2003, died April 23. After graduating from Harvard University, the New York native moved to Mississippi to begin his career as a journalist. On the staff of the West Point *Daily Times Leader*, Halberstam covered the beginnings of the civil rights movement in the state. By 1960 he was a reporter for the *New York Times*, covering the early years of the American war in South Vietnam, exposing the corrupt government there as well as other aspects of the conflict. For that work he shared a Pulitzer Prize in 1964. He went on to write more than twenty books. Halberstam's address at the dedication of the Winter Building was published in the Summer 2005 issue of the *Journal of Mississippi History*. In that address he referred to Governor Winter as "my favorite American politician, my personal hero." He ended the address with these words about the new Mississippi archives building: "So many of our secrets are housed here. How fortunate we will be if a new generation of talented young

men and women come here and study them (and study us in the process), for the less secret the past becomes, the freer we will all be."

Carey Bell, 1936-2007

Blues harmonica player Carey Bell, who performed with both Muddy Waters and Willie Dixon, died May 6 in Chicago. "He was truly a master of his instrument," said *Alligator* label president Bruce Iglauer. "When he picked up that harp, it was deep down. He reached in."

Carey Bell Harrington was born on November 14, 1936, in Macon. He wanted a saxophone but his family could not afford one. Instead, his grandfather bought him a harmonica. He was playing the harmonica by age 8, and in 1956, at age 19, he moved to Chicago with his godfather, pianist Lovie Lee. Soon, he was supporting himself as a professional musician, playing on the street for tips, Iglauer said. He learned from Marion "Little Walter" Jacobs and Sonny Boy Williamson II, but found a special fatherly mentor in Big Walter Horton. Bell spent 1971 traveling and recording with Muddy Waters and worked regularly in the 1970s with Willie Dixon's Chicago Blues All-Stars. (Biloxi *Sun-Herald*)

Mohamed Show at Lauren Rogers

The embroidered "story pictures," of Belzoni artist Ethel Wright Mohamed are featured through July 8 in "The Needle's Song: The Folk Art of Ethel Wright Mohamed," at the Lauren Rogers Museum, Laurel. During the 1970s Smithsonian Institution researchers identified Mohamed's work, which vibrantly depicts life in her family and community, and secured pieces for the Smithsonian collection. The Old Capitol Museum has featured Mohamed's in several major exhibitions, permanent exhibits, and two volumes on the subject. For more information, call 601-649-6374.

The 43rd Annual Mississippi Civil Rights Martyrs Memorial Service and Conference and Caravan for Justice will be held at the Longdale Community Center site, County Road 632, Neshoba County, Mississippi June 23-24, 2007. For more information, call chair John Steele at 925-497-9868.

Richard Wright Branch

The South Hills Branch of the Jackson Public Library System, 515 West McDowell Road, was officially renamed for Richard Wright on April 20. Wright related in his autobiography that in order to obtain books from the public library, he had to forge notes saying that he was getting the books for a white co-worker.

Richard Wright was elected to the Mississippi Hall of Fame in 2006. This year, the eve of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, he is being honored in *Reading Richard Wright*, a program coordinated by Copiah-Lincoln Junior College, in Natchez, Wright's birthplace. For more information on the program, visit colin.edu/nlcc/wright-reading.htm. The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will feature Richard Wright and his works at the 19th annual NLCC, February 21-24, 2008.

2007 Mississippi LAMP (Library and Archival Media Professionals) Workshop, August 27-30. For information visit lampworkshop.org.

2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration to Explore Southern Language

The right word can make us laugh, cry, sing along, be inspired. In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing. So says Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, founder of the annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration and a longtime board member of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

"To explore the way we talk and write in the South, the 18th annual Celebration will use the theme of 'Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South,'" Smith said. The conference, which has won national awards for humanities programming, is free of charge. It annually attracts hundreds of people who love books and the opportunity to talk about them, Smith said.

Conference dates are February 22-25, 2007, with headquarters at the Natchez Convention Center.

A highlight of the conference is a two-part program by U.S. Senator Thad Cochran and David Sansing, professor of history emeritus at Ole Miss. Cochran's program is called "The Sound and the Fury: Southern Voices in the United States Senate." Sansing will discuss language used by U.S. Senator L. Q. C. Lamar of Mississippi, the subject of a new book he is writing.

Another conference highlight is a program about famous Southern preachers by Center director and author Charles Reagan Wilson and award-winning author Will Campbell of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.

Other programs will address Southern speech as used by characters

in the works of Richard Wright and William Faulkner; word play, which was beloved by Eudora Welty; dialect and messages in Negro spirituals; and writings of humorists such as Mark Twain and Robert St. John.

Also to be discussed are lyrics in country music, how Hollywood approaches Southern accents in films, and much more, Smith said. Films, concerts, a play, receptions, meals, writing workshops, book signings, and a writing award ceremony will also be included in the event.

Sponsoring the conference with Colin are the Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. Information may be obtained about the conference by visiting www.colin.edu/nlcc.

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Jackson, MS



Friday September 14, 2007
7:00 pm
Natchez Community Center
213 Franklin Street - Natchez

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NAPAC Members \$15.00 <small>(without membership card for discount)</small>	601-443-0728
Non-Members: \$20.00 (includes NAPAC membership)	
Tickets at Door \$25.00	

All Other Donations Graciously Accepted!

Program sponsored by the Natchez Richard Wright Centennial Celebration Committee
the Natchez Literary and Circus Celebration

TICKETS FOR SALE AT OFFICE OF
THE NATCHEZ Literary and Circus Celebration
near the book store at Co-Lin

Copiah-Lincoln Community College

21 Co-Lin Circle - Natchez, MS 39020 - (601) 443-0711 - FAX (601) 443-0287

TO: All Faculty & Staff

FROM: Teresa Harrison *TH*

DATE: 29 August 2007

RE: NLCC Activities

Please find attached materials regarding several events and activities in Fall 2007 and throughout 2008 relating to the Richard Wright Centennial Celebration.

Richard Wright was born near Natchez in 1908, the son of an illiterate sharecropper and a country school teacher. He grew up to become one of the most outstanding authors of all time, particularly noted for *Native Son*, *Black Boy*, and *Uncle Tom's Children*, the latter having been chosen as Book of the Year.

The 2008 NLCC will use the theme of "Richard Wright, the South, and the World: A Centennial Celebration." Please plan to join us at the NLCC, February 21 - 24, 2008. This conference will kick off a world-wide, year-long recognition of Richard Wright and his legacy. Please share this information with your students, family and friends.

Thank you for your support and please feel free to contact Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith if you have any questions.

CC: Dr. Howell Garner
Dr. Ramona Haffner

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Co-Lin Community College to offer broadcasting class

SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

NATCHEZ — Copiah-Lincoln Community College is offering an Introduction to Broadcasting class this fall semester.

The three-credit, college-level class is designed to teach students principles of making films and documentaries, use of digital video cameras, creation of projects with digital video editing software, development of broadcast-quality programs, development of a broadcast-quality voice and radio scripts.

One of the main projects will be the creation of a mini-documentary about Richard Wright, the Natchez native who went

on to international literary acclaim.

"We are planning to premiere the documentary at the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration in February 2008, the centennial year of Wright's birth," said Mark LaFrancis, instructor. "The documentary will be designed to enlighten and educate high school students to Richard Wright's life."

Wright was born the son of a sharecropper in rural Adams County in 1908, yet through his passion for writing and determination to expose racial and economic injustice, Wright became a newspaper and magazine contributor and an author of a dozen novels, mostly cen-

tering on the plight of blacks in America.

The class is open to all individuals regardless of their experience with cameras, LaFrancis said. Students do not have to have cameras. Enrollment is limited.

The class may be taken by itself or in conjunction with other classes at Co-Lin. Introduction to Broadcasting will be taught Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. in the Lecture Hall in the Tom Reed Academic Center. Classes start Aug. 14.

For information, contact LaFrancis at 601-446-1205, or the Co-Lin Admissions Office at 601-442-9111.

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OPINION

4A THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT

www.natchezdemocrat.com

TUESDAY, JUNE 5, 2007

Mississippi's Best Community Daily Newspaper

Natchez Literary and Cinema a success

The Feb. 22-25, Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration was an exemplary model of a public humanities program that was envisioned in the establishment of the National Endowment for the Humanities and its state affiliates.

The scholarly lectures and presentations open to the public free of charge created an independently functional framework.

However, the ticketed events, including a musical presentation, a dramatic performance, two workshops and several social activities, enhanced and expanded the substantive content of the conference.

These events affirmed the value of interdisciplinary breadth so apparent in the planning and implementation of the conference, hosted by Co-plain-Lincoln Community College and supported by the Mississippi Humanities Council, the Mississippi Arts Commission, the Natchez National Historic Park, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Mississippi Public Broadcasting and community and civic volunteers and students.

The conference obviously reflects the expertise and acumen of Project Director Carolyn Vance Smith and her Co-Lin colleagues. Exemplary planning, coordination and implementation came to fruition in every component of a series of diverse endeavors that reflected the topic, "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

The focal appeals in the diverse formats were the literal, artistic and imaginative interpretations of the word "accents" in relation to linguistic symbols that were defined relative to the diversity of both usage and users of the English language.

The scholarly understanding of the complexity of language at the base of all humanities disciplines affirmed the planners' sound judgment in selecting scholars and presenters and types of usage contexts that exemplified, amplified and clarified the advocacies of the scholars.

Very effective technical uses of audio and vi-



**TOP
OF THE
MORNING**

Jack H.
White

sual media and the Natchez Convention Center as a setting created full audience access to every dimension of the program. Numerous attractive displays by publishers, booksellers, authors and sponsors provided participants with another level of instruction in foreshadowing the publication of conference papers in *The Southern Quarterly* by the University of Southern Mississippi.

Kathleen McClain Jenkins, superintendent of the Natchez National Historic Park, succinctly set forth the charge that all of the scholars addressed: "The challenge of preservation is to transcend the past to find its meaning in the present."

Other speakers, including William Kretzschmar, Charles Reagan Wilson, Will Campbell, Clarence Jones, Donald Kartiganer, Diane Williams, Suzanne Marrs, Todd Sanders, Davis Raines, Tricia Walker, Allyn Partin-Hernandez, Stephen Sloan, Jerry W. Ward Jr., Senator Thad Cochran and David G. Sansing, offered effective and powerful examples of the use of the South's language in various aspects. This conference, which drew capacity crowds of diverse age, gender and race, is one truly worthy of MHC support and one that has represented well the MHC, NEH, MAC, NEA and other supporters.

The event's content successfully taught a public audience, but it dramatically transcended mere instruction to offer insights that stimulated personal identification and cultural awareness at a praiseworthy level. Although the larger program was exemplary as a synthesis of the humanities disciplines, the setting, tone and individual sessions certainly affirmed Eudora Welty's seminal analysis of a "a sense of place."

JACK H. White of Columbus is an official Mississippi Humanities Council evaluator of the 2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.

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The Colinian

Volume 33, No. 1 • January 2007

Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration

The right word can make us laugh, cry, sing along, be inspired. In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing.

So says Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez campus, founder of the annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration and co-chairman of the conference since its beginning in 1990.

"To explore the way we talk and write in the South, the 18th annual Celebration will use the theme of 'Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South,'" Smith said.

The conference, which has won national awards for humanities programming, is free of charge. It annually attracts hundreds of people who love books and the opportunity to talk about them, Smith said.

the People: The Lyrics of Country Music and American Social Change" by musicians Tricia Walker and Davis Raines.

Walker, a Co-Lin graduate, is the new head of the Delta Music Institute at Delta State University, Cleveland, Miss. Raines is a singer/songwriter of Nashville, Tenn. During their program, they will perform country songs to illustrate their research.

Other programs will address Southern speech as used by

In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing.

characters in the works of Richard Wright and William

T Bluff City T HE POS T

18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration to focus on Southern language

The right word can make us laugh, cry, sing along or be inspired, says Carolyn Vance Smith of Copiah-Lincoln Community College in Natchez.

The annual conference is devoted to exploring various

four sponsoring agencies, which are Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

Funding also comes through grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities

Page 8 Bluff City Post

Literary

from page 1

* William Faulkner's use of language by Faulkner scholar Donald Kartiganer, University of Mississippi

* Eudora Welty's love of word play by Welty scholar Suzanne Marrs, Millsaps College, Jackson, Miss.

* Dialect and messages of

of Southern Mississippi
Other program components include:

* A reception and supper at the Museum of the Natchez Association for the Preservation of Afro-American Culture Feb. 22 (\$15)

* A concert of spirituals by

Page 2: In Co-LiNatchez - January 16, 2007

NLCC to celebrate 18th season

The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration in February will mark its 18th season. Programs will be held at Co-Lin Natchez, the Natchez Convention Center, and elsewhere in the Miss-Lou. Co-Lin is the founder and co-sponsor of the NLCC.

This year's programs will be Feb. 22-25, and the theme is "Southern Accents: Language

in the Deep South."

Presentations, lectures, and discussions will center on how Southerners talk, write and think in their unique way and with their unique accent.

Co-Lin staff and students are invited to attend. Most of the events are free.

Brochures have been placed around campus. For more information: www.colin.edu/nlcc.

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The University of Mississippi

Oxford • Jackson • Tupelo • Southaven

Center for the Study of Southern Culture

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Fax: (662) 915-5814

E-mail: cssc@olemiss.edu

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To: Center Advisory Committee
From: Charles Reagan Wilson
Subject: Natchez Meeting
Date: January 29, 2007

Greetings and Happy New Year! I hope 2007 has begun well, and we are all looking forward to our next meeting.

I can report that last year's Future of the South Conference, held in Little Rock in November, was a wonderful event, with a high-level conversation focused on Community, Leadership, and the Future of the South. I'm enclosing a copy of the program to give you an idea of the meeting.

We are also looking forward to this year's Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, February 22-25. The theme is "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South." The Center is hosting a reception on Saturday, February 24, for 4 to 5 p.m.

The next morning, February 25, we will gather at beautiful Elgin Plantation for our Advisory meeting and breakfast. Thanks, as always, to Ruth Ellen Calhoun for hosting us. Thanks also to Carolyn Vance Smith for another great program and for assistance with the reception.

Enclosed is a form to let us know if you will be able to attend the meeting. Please return by Monday, February 12. You will also find a copy of the Natchez Celebration schedule. You can also check their Web site for additional information at www.colin.edu/nlcc.

We are excited about our Blues Today Symposium, February 14-16 in Oxford. This year's theme is Blueswomen Today, and we have a first-rate group of scholars, commentators, and performers coming to town. For more information on the Symposium, please call the Center at 662-915-5993.

This year's Oxford Conference for the Book will be truly special. We have dedicated it to Oxford's own Larry Brown, and this will be the first conference to assess this significance of Larry's work. He was beloved by many writers and many of them will be

A Great American Public University

www.olemiss.edu

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NLCC opens with special program at Co-Lin



Two major events during the 2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will take place on the Natchez campus of Copeland-Lewis Community College. They are:

- A first pre-conference program at 11 a.m., Feb. 21
- A full non-conference package

conference is free of charge, with no registration necessary. Sponsors of the conference are Co-Lin, which founded the NLCC in 1990, and Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Mississippi Public Broadcasting. Partial funding comes

by the NLCC, Student Support Services and Co-Lin Natchez. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to attend.

Williams is the author of *Annie Mae Jumps the Broom* and *The Storytelling Classroom—Applications Across the Curriculum*.

His column *How much to the*

Ston, Co-director, The Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg. His program is called "The Voice of the Past: A Workshop on Oral History."

A refreshment break from 10:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. will feature remarks and readings of Ellen

Saxon selected as Winter scholars



Technical Education Center, then in the Willie Mae Dunn Library. At Co-Lin Natchez, Richard coordinates the Special Interest Class Program and the summertime Kids College.

In 2006, Richard earned her master's degree in Library and Information Science at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Co-Lin Natchez, earning her Associate in Arts degree, but returning to Co-Lin Natchez for additional course work. She is working toward a career in health care.

In April 2006 Saxon was inducted into the Co-Lin Natchez Hall of Fame, the highest honor a student can achieve. Her sister Danielle, also

Authors, screenwriter to be honored at ceremony

Winning awards for excellence in writing at the 2007 Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration are three nationally recognized writers, all with deep Mississippi roots.

The awards ceremony, set for 3 p.m., Sat., Feb. 24, at the Natchez Convention Center, honors Beverly F. Lowry and Al Young, winners of the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Awards, and Charles Burnett, winner of the Horton Foote Award for Special Achievement in Screenwriting. The event is free and open to the public.

The Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award was established in

1994 to honor the internationally known author, Richard Wright.

Lowry, who was reared in Greenville, Miss., and educated at The University of Mississippi, now lives in Austin, Tex., and is a professor of creative writing at Georgia Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

She is the author of *Crossed Over: A Murder, A Memoir, Her Dream of Dreams: The Rise and Triumph of Madame C. J. Walker, The Track of Real Desires, Come Back, Lady Ray: Breaking Gentle, The Perfect Storm, Keweenaw Blue, Daddy's Girl and Harriet Tubman, Imagining a Life*, to be published in April.



Young

Lowry

Burnett

She has also published numerous non-fiction essays, memoirs and articles.

Young, a native of Ocean Springs, Miss., and now of Berkeley, Calif., is distinguished as the current California Poet Laureate. He grew up in the South, the Midwest and on the West Coast and was educated at

the University of Michigan and the University of California at Berkeley.

His novels include *Who Is Angelina?*, *Sitting Pretty*, *Ask Me Now* and *Selection by Light*. His books of poetry are *Dancing*, *The Song Turning Back Into Itself*, *Geography of the Near Past*, *The Blues Don't Change* and collected poems, *Hausen*.

The Horton Foote Award for Special Achievement in Screenwriting was established in February 2002 to honor Horton Foote of Wharton, Tex., an Oscar-winning and Pulitzer Prize-winning writer of

screenplays, plays and a non-fiction memoir.

Charles Burnett, winner of the Horton Foote Award in 2007, is a native of Vicksburg, Miss., who now lives in Los Angeles. He attended Los Angeles Community College and the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

He is author of the screenplays *Killer of Sheep*, *Do Sleep with Angels*, *My Brother's Wedding*, *Guests of Hotel Atlanta*, *The Glass Shield*, *When Is Rain?*, *Nightjohn*, *The Wedding*, *Dr. Endo's Kid*, *Miss Holland*, *Selma*, *Lord, Selma*, and *The Assassination of Fish*.

Complete NLCC schedule on Pages 8-9

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NLCC kicks off Feb. 21

The 18th Annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration begins with a special program at Co-Lin Natchez co-sponsored by Student Support Services, and held in conjunction with February Black History Month.

Award-winning storyteller Diane Williams will present "Storytelling in the South: A Way of Life," Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 11 a.m., in the W. L. Nelson Multi-Purpose Room. Williams' program relates directly to the theme of this year's NLCC: "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

The majority of the award-winning, mostly free NLCC will take place at the Natchez Convention Center, 211 Main St. Lectures, book signings, films, discussion sessions, receptions and more are on tap.

Williams, an author, editor, workshop presenter and Arts Industry Director for the Mississippi Arts Commission, likes to say she is "a keeper of treasured tales, collector of phrases and a griot."



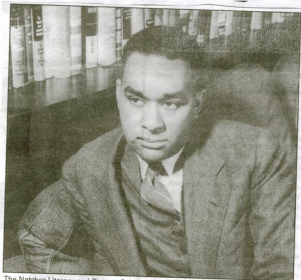
Williams

Feb. 14-27, 2007

Natchez, Mississippi

www.missloulomagazine.com

Miss-Lou



The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration presents *Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South*, Feb. 22-25. Roxie native and novelist Richard Wright will be discussed.

Wright remembered

by Richard Wormser

Natchez's most famous authors are probably Greg Iles and Richard Wright. And while many locals know about Iles' recent best-selling efforts, more than a few people just don't know that much about Wright. Wright has become a fixture or legend of history and the murky past.

Wright was born in Roxie in 1908 and lived for a short time in Natchez as a youngster. His grandparents had been slaves and his father had abandoned his family when he was six. His mother worked as a cook to support the family. They suffered from extreme poverty, especially after his mother became ill. Wright wanted to write from a very young age, and he was happy when, at the age of 16, a newspaper printed one of his first stories.

Although no one in his family encouraged his dream, he refused to give it up. He worked a number of jobs across the South as a young man, unable to accept the prejudices and insults of Jim Crow. He kept reading and thinking about becoming a writer.

In 1927, he left Memphis and moved to

See Wright, page 15

Wright continued from page 1

Chicago. After working in unskilled jobs, he was given the chance to write. He joined the John Reed Club in Chicago, an organization set up by the Communist Party to recruit workers into its ranks. Wright joined the Party, and in 1937 he went to New York to write for the Daily Worker, the party's newspaper.

His first book, "Uncle Tom's Children" (1938), was greeted with critical praise. His next work, "Native Son" (1940), the story of a black man who inadvertently kills a white woman, made him famous. The book was a best-seller and was staged successfully as a play on Broadway (1941) by genius director Orson Welles. Wright himself played Bigger Thomas, the book's main character, in the movie version made in Argentina in 1951.

In 1944, he left the Communist Party because of its strong arm tactics and personal differences. His next book, "Black Boy" (1945), told the wrenching story of his childhood and youth in the South, detailing

Toward the end of his life, he became involved with the Pan-African movement, the political effort to unite the disparate African countries, as colonialism came to a close. He also battled with a new generation of black writers, including Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin, over the future of black literature and the telling of the black experience.

The author's family had moved to England, but Wright was unable to obtain a visa and leave France. He contracted an undetermined illness and died unexpectedly in Paris in 1960 at the age of 52.

Wright's autobiographical "American Hunger" documents his experiences in the Communist Party and was published after his death in 1977. His legacy is as a passionate writer who documented the historical and sociological aspects of the black experience in literary form.

Best works: "Native Son" and "Black Boy." Best quotes: "Men can starve from a lack of self-realization as much as they can from a lack of bread." "I would hurl words

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The 18th annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration
presents

Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South

**Thurs.-Sun., Feb. 22-25, 2007
Natchez Convention Center, Natchez, Miss.**

Lectures, Films, Writing Workshops,
Book Signings, Parties, Meals, &
"Twain by the Tale," in cooperation
with the Natchez Little Theatre

All free or low-cost!

Toll-free 866-296-6522
or 601-446-1289
or visit www.colin.edu/nlcc

Sponsors:

Copiah-Lincoln Community College
Natchez National Historical Park
Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Mississippi Public Broadcasting



"TRADING"

Photo by Eudora Welty, c. 1932
Courtesy of Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Save the date:

19th annual NLCC Feb. 21-24, 2008

*Richard Wright (1908-1960),
the South, and the World:
A Centennial Celebration*

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18th Annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South

February 22 - 25

Natchez, Mississippi

The Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, winner of an Olympic Award, the Governor's Award, and the Mississippi Tourism Award, has been called by official evaluators "Mississippi's most significant annual conference devoted to literature, history, film, and culture."

Begun in 1990 by Copiah-Lincoln Community College and now sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln, Natchez National Historic Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting, the Celebration annually presents a theme-based lecture series enhanced by films, field trips, writing workshops, concerts, plays, special meals, receptions, exhibits, book signings, and discussions.

The right word can make us laugh, cry, sing along, and/or be inspired. In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing. Because language is so important, the 2007 NLCC will explore the way Southerners talk and write, all the while revealing the history and culture of the Deep South.

From Louisiana Cajun dialect to Appalachian hillbilly humor, from patrician orations to fire-and-damnation sermons, from quirky song lyrics to touching stories, words in the South might differ from region to region, but everywhere they are fascinating and often profoundly moving. Explore and enjoy the subject of language at the 18th Annual NLCC. Welcome, y'all!

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Because of financial support from a National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant, the Mississippi Humanities Council, and others, most of the NLCC is free or low cost. Tickets for events are as follows: reception and supper February 22 - \$15; spirituals concert, February 22 - \$10; luncheon, February 23 - \$20; Mark Twain play, February 23 - \$15; The Briars benefit reception/supper honoring award winners/speakers, February 24 - \$125 (\$100 tax deductible); writing workshops, February 25 - \$15.

For more information on ticketed events, visit www.colin.edu/nlcc.

February 22—25

LITERA & LEARNING

Literary Celebration- Language in the Deep South, Natchez, Ms

Now hear this: The wintertime tradition that turns the spotlight of scholarship on aspects of southern culture, from the printed page to the silver screen, returns when the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration explores the theme Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South.


"In the Deep South, using the right word is as important as breathing," said Carolyn Smith, founder and co-chairman of the eighteen-year-old conference. "Because language is so important, in 2007 we'll explore the way Southerners talk and write, and, at the same time, we'll learn interesting aspects of the history and culture of our part of the country."

From Louisiana Cajun dialect to Appalachian hillbilly humor, from patrician orations to fire-and-damnation sermons, from quirky song lyrics to touching stories, words in the South might differ from region to region, but are everywhere fascinating and frequently profoundly moving, Smith said. The subject of language

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• **Wednesday, February 14th**--

ILR will have a Valentine Luncheon at 11:00 a.m. The Activity Room is located in the Academic Building near the Bookstore. Carolyn Vance Smith with the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration will be our guest speaker. She will be informing us about the upcoming Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration events. This will also be our "Brown Bag" lecture, so please bring your lunch or you can order from Co-Lin's cafeteria. Please RSVP by Monday, February 12th. You can contact me at 446-1210 or by email at dee.ray@colin.edu. ILR members will receive a small discount on your NLCC tickets if you order them from Dee. Please come and show your support.



KREWE OF ALPHEUS PARADE
February 9 at 6:00 p.m.

KREWE OF PHOENIX
February 16 at 4 p.m.

NATCHEZ LITERARY AND CINEMA CELEBRATION
"Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South"
February 22-25

Voted "Mississippi's most significant annual conference devoted to literature, history, and culture." For more details - www.colin.edu/nlcc or 866-296-6522

*The 18th Annual
Natchez Literary and
Cinema Celebration
Presents*

**SOUTHERN ACCENTS:
LANGUAGE IN
THE DEEP SOUTH**

*And celebrates
With Lunch at the
Carriage House
Restaurant
Friday, February 23, 2007
On the Grounds*

NEED A RIDE DURING THE NLCC?

A dark blue Copiah-Lincoln Community College van and a dark green Toyota van will be of service to speakers and other VIPs during the NLCC. They will pick up at the Canal Street entrance to the Natchez Convention Center Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 22-24, and operate as follows:

- Thurs., Feb. 22, 2007
11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m., from Convention Center to Magnolia Hall, 215 S. Pearl St., and back, for lunch
- Fri., Feb. 23, 2007
12 p.m. to 2 p.m. from Convention Center to Carriage House at Stanton Hall.

NATCHEZ LITERARY & CINEMA CELEBRATION

Natchez, Mississippi

FEBRUARY 22-25, 2007

Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South

Conference co-sponsors:

Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi
Department of Archives and History, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting

Co-chairmen:

Carolyn Vance Smith, Kathleen Jenkins, Jim Barnett, and Marie Antoon

Director of Proceedings: William F. Winter

For information about Natchez and where to stay, visit:

Natchez Convention and Visitor Bureau

Other Natchez sites to visit:

www.RosalieMansion.com

www.natchezchamber.com

*For questions and or ticket orders call toll-free 1-866-1-866-296-NLCC (1-866-296-6522)
or e-mail nlcctickets@colin.edu*



"STORYTELLING IN THE SOUTH: A WAY OF LIFE"

A program for Copiah-Lincoln Community College students, faculty, and staff

BY DIANE WILLIAMS
ARTS INDUSTRY PROGRAM DIRECTOR
MISSISSIPPI ARTS COMMISSION
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

11 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2007

Nelson Multi-Purpose Room, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez, Mississippi
*This program is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Student Support Services,
and the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.*

Presiding:

Diane Williams is Arts Industry Program Director, Mississippi Arts Commission, Jackson, Miss., where she works with individual artists and nonprofit arts and cultural organizations to expand their capacity to carry out their programs, assure the adequacy of critical resources, strengthen management skills, and participate as full partners with other civic institutions in the lives of their community. She attended Houston Community College, Essex College, and American Management Association. She is past Board Chair, National Storytelling Network, and is author of *Annie Mae Jumps the Broom* and *The Storytelling Classroom - Applications Across the Curriculum*.

This program is a special component of the 18th Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration
"SOUTHERN ACCENTS: LANGUAGE IN THE DEEP SOUTH"
Feb. 22-25, 2007

Headquarters: Natchez Convention Center, 211 Main Street

Most of the conference is free of charge. The public is invited.

Tickets to two events at the Natchez Convention Center are available at the door. They are:

- A concert, "Rejoice and Sing," by the Alcorn State University Choir, 7:30 p.m., Thurs., Feb. 22, @ \$10.
- A play, *Twain by the Tale*, 8 p.m., Fri., Feb. 23, @ \$15.

For complete conference schedule: www.colin.edu/nlcc

The NLCC is sponsored by Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Natchez National Historical Park, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, and Mississippi Public Broadcasting.
This project is partially funded by the Mississippi Humanities Council.



*The Natchez Literary
and Cinema Celebration*

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NLCC has another successful program

Two events held at Co-Lin Natchez

N-Sights Staff

The award-winning Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration was praised for another successful NLCC program this spring.

Co-Lin Natchez, founder and co-sponsor, figured prominently in the NLCC, which ran from Feb. 22 through 25 with the theme "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South."

Two major events were held at Co-Lin.

Student Support Services partnered with the NLCC for a Black History Month Program. Storyteller Diane Williams, arts industry program director of the Mississippi Arts Commission in Jackson, presented "Storytelling in the South: A Way of Life."

In the event, held Feb. 21, Williams wove segments of her own past and stories she remembers with those of Southern culture and life.

The other Co-Lin program was on Feb. 23, closing out the 17th Annual NLCC. That day, The Ellen Douglas Writing Workshop was held in the Riddick Watkins Career and Technical Education Center. About 150 people attended a workshop on oral history and a discussion of Richard Wright's book, "Lizard Today," by Dr. Jerry W. Ward Jr., distinguished scholar and professor of English and African World Studies at Dillard University in New Orleans.

"The 18th annual NLCC, using the theme of 'Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South,' was another huge success, thanks to magnificent support from Co-Lin, the other sponsoring agencies, and the entire Natchez community," said Carolyn Vance Smith of Co-Lin Natchez, founder and co-chairman of the Olympic Award-winning conference.

"Each program during the five-day conference was absolutely first-class and thoroughly enjoyable. We had some of the largest audiences we've ever had, numbering in the hundreds. In fact, the opening session was the biggest ever, and several ticketed events were sold out.

"We're planning now for the 19th Celebration, which will take place Feb. 21-24, 2008, using the theme of 'Richard Wright (1908-1960), the South, and the World: A Centennial Celebration.' The keynote speaker is Richard Wright's

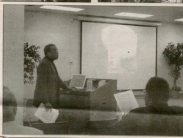


Above: Co-Lin administrators are joined by Jan Barnett, far left, of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, at the opening of the 17th Annual Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration. From left are Barnett, Co-Lin Natchez Dean Teresa Harrison, Co-Lin Executive Vice President Dr. Ronnie Nettles, and Co-Lin President Dr. Howell C. Garner. Above right, former Miss. Gov. William Winter, the NLCC director of proceedings, gives the address as William A. Kretschmar Jr., professor of English and Linguistics at the University of Georgia, and Natchez Mayor Philip West look on.

daughter, Julia Wright, of Paris, France. She is an author and highly sought-after speaker. We are delighted to honor Natchez's true native son with next year's event."

Another highlight of this year's NLCC was the presentation of awards. Two authors with Mississippi connections were given the Richard Wright Award for Literary Excellence. One is Beverly Lowry of Greenville, author of "Crossed Over: A Murder, A Memoir," "The Dream of Dreams: The Rise and Triumph of Madam C. J. Walker," "Come Back, Lolly Kay," and "Harriet Eubank: Imagining a Life," which was scheduled to be published in April. The other is Al Young, a native of Ocean Springs, and Poet Laureate of California. He is the author of "Who Is Angelina?" "Sitting Pretty," "Ask Me Now," "Seduction by Light," "Dancing," and "The Song Turning Back Into Itself." Young was unable to be at the NLCC, but accepted via video that was played during the awards night.

The Horton Foote Award for Screenplay Writing was awarded to Charles Burnett, a native of Vicksburg.



At left Dr. Jerry W. Ward Jr., distinguished scholar at Dillard University in New Orleans, leads a discussion of Richard Wright's "Lizard Today" at Co-Lin. Above, Beverly Lowry receives the Richard Wright Literary Excellence Award from John B. W. Gaice from the University of Southern Mississippi.

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THE 18TH ANNUAL
NATCHEZ LITERARY AND CINEMA CELEBRATION

"SOUTHERN
ACCENTS:
LANGUAGE IN
THE DEEP
SOUTH"

FEBRUARY 22-25, 2007
NATCHEZ,
MISSISSIPPI

SPONSORED BY:
COPIAH-LINCOLN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NATCHEZ NATIONAL
HISTORICAL PARK

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT
OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

Partially funded by the Mississippi
Humanities Council and the
National Endowment for the
Humanities



Feeling lucky? Support the NLCC and win a big prize

By Maria Bowser

NLCC Advisory Board
Are you feeling lucky? For \$30 a chance, you could win one of four spectacular packages to be raffled during the upcoming Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration, Feb. 22-24.

With your purchase, you will be supporting the NLCC's efforts to continue providing top-quality programs. This year's theme of "Southern Accents: Language in the Deep South" is certainly something of interest to "all y'all."

Come to the conference, and while you are in the Convention Center lobby, stop by the raffle table and buy chances on the following packages of goodies.

Package #1: This is a trip for two on the *River Explorer*, valued at more than \$5,000 and donated by the RiverBarge Excursion Lines, Inc. of New Orleans. This package features an 8-day trip on the *River Explorer*, the only hotel barge on America's waterways.

The winner can choose a trip from an extensive list of itineraries in seven geographic regions. The all-inclusive package includes hospitable accommodations with a river-view, all meals, snacks, coffee and soft drinks, all gratuities, taxes,



The *River Explorer* rounds the bend near Natchez, Miss.

port charges and scheduled shore activities. The regional food on board is terrific.

The trip won was the past two years by Natchezians who can attest to the winning power of just one ticket.

Package #2: The "Belk's Home Package" is full of wonderful items, just ready to help indulge the winner's desire to make a few changes around the house. Stop by and look at the spectacular display. Thanks to Belk's manager Mary Flach and to Rose Kammendeier

for putting this incredible package together.

Package #3: The "Looking Ahead to 2008 Package" includes works by Richard Wright, the Natchez-born author whose 100th birthday is the theme of the 2008 conference. "Richard Wright: The South and the World: A Centennial Celebration."

The winner of this package will receive admission to all NLCC ticketed events in 2008, a certificate worth about \$100. The Natchez Little Theater, which in 2008

will produce a play adapted from Wright's *Native Son*, has generously donated two Grand Benefactor Level tickets for the 2007-08 60th Diamond Jubilee Season—a very special treat that lasts all year.

Package #4: The "Books, Theater, Film and Music" package features a wide array of books, movies and CD's featuring works of speakers, award winners and others involved with the NLCC, including Jennifer Ogden, Tricia Walker, Davis Raines, Dr. Jerry Ward and Carolyn Vance Smith. A collection of Eudora Welty's short stories is included.

A real treat for past attendees is the special publication of *The Southern Quarterly* of the University of Southern Mississippi, featuring selected papers from last year's NLCC, which used the theme, Southern food and drink.

Topping off the package is a photo session with T.C. McCarty Photography, including an 11 x 14 portrait.

The generosity of many people and businesses has made these packages possible. Thanks to Eddie Conrad and the RiverBarge Excursion Lines, Inc. of New Orleans, Mary Flach and Rose Kammendeier of Belk's in Natchez, Layne Taylor and the Natchez Little

Theater, Charles Hall of Cover to Cover, Lorna Maxwell at Maxwell Printing, and Kathy Stephens, Elliot Ernst, Sim Callen, Sue Moser and my good buddies, the Divine Divas of Raffles, Micki Hartley, Linda Ogden and Shirley Petkovsek.

Now that you are clutching your rabbi's foot, how do you go about buying a raffle ticket? Call me at 601-445-2133 or purchase tickets in the lobby of the Natchez Convention Center during the NLCC.

Our raffle team will sell chances from 8:30 a.m., Feb. 22, until drawing time, 4 p.m., Sat., Feb. 24. You do not have to be present to win.

AND, just in everyone is a winner—with each raffle ticket comes a coupon good for one free book at the Friends of the Library book sales at Armstrong Library in Natchez. Lucky or not, who can resist a free book?

Support a worthy cause. Support the award-winning NLCC. Buy a raffle ticket and keep your fingers crossed!

SAVE THE DATES
19TH ANNUAL NLCC
Feb. 21-24, 2008

HONORING
RICHARD WRIGHT

Isle of Capri Casino & Hotel



Play and Stay in Paradise! Discover the treasures that await you at the Isle of Capri Casino and Hotel in beautiful Natchez, MS!

The Isle of Capri proudly supports the 18th Anniversary of the Natchez Literary Cinema Celebration.



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